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SCRIPTURAL REVISION
OF
SOCINIAN ARGUMENTS
VINDICATED,
AGAINST THE REPLY

OF
BENJAMIN HOBHOUSE, Esq.

BY THE
REV^D. F. RANDOLPH, M. A. *K*

Late Fellow of King's College, Cambridge; and Chaplain to
his Royal Highness the Duke of York.

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P R E F A C E.

TO BENJAMIN HOBHOUSE, ESQ.

DEAR SIR,

AS you have chosen to impose upon me the task of vindication, by a voluntary and formal defence of the opinions of Dr. Priestley, I feel it necessary to make a few observations on the introductory remarks with which you have prefaced your work, and some apology also for the delay of a publication, which the more material objects of my professional situation, have hitherto obliged me to postpone. The credit you give me* for a belief of those doctrines I endeavour to support, I am unwilling to derive from our long subsisting intimacy,

* See Reply, Preface and Introduction.

because it is an acknowledgment that your candour, I trust, would not withhold from *any religious opponent*. And if the most unqualified testimony to the honesty of your mind, and no small respect for your abilities, *can be of any service* to the cause you seem to have so much at heart, you will accept this tribute of estimation from one, whose habits of familiar intercourse with you only serve to render more painful the regret with which *on this subject* he takes up the pen to address you.

Educated as we both were in the principles of the *established* church, and trained in the same course of religious instruction, how different have proved the fruits of a similar cultivation. With a renunciation of *all that you had learnt*, your riper judgment has forbidden an acquiescence in doctrines you have discovered to be erroneous.^b And I on the

^b Preface, p. 4.

contrary,

contrary, with the same freedom of enquiry, and with the same means of information, have more firmly embraced *all that I had been taught*, on the fullest conviction of its importance, and can trace the *best* direction of my faculties to the dictates of parental admonition. And whilst *you* have thought proper to take leave of a church, the tenets of which *you* can no longer approve; more closely attached to its religious communion, *I* feel a greater veneration for the spiritual building, in proportion as I have been able to examine the divine solidity of its architecture.

It had been my wish, indeed, that in thus publicly avowing your faith, and discharging *what you felt to be a duty of indispensable obligation*, you had not made me the medium of communication; and I am afraid that the *love of victory* (though far from supposing it to have taken place) has in this instance been too strongly blended with the love of truth.

At

At least I cannot help attributing your reply to a certain *esprit de corps*, (if I may so call it) which, always ready for attack, pitched upon you as a *proper person* to check my daring presumption. The defeat of a clergyman in the *field of divinity* was too tempting a prize for a layman to forego, and an *assured triumph* to a novice in arms was a powerful inducement to excite you to begin the combat.

As to the *local* consideration, that the people of a neighbourhood are likely to become interested in a question, when it is discussed by gentlemen well known to them, I suspect that *even there* our strength will be exercised to little purpose, and that the respective accounts of our booksellers will leave this

^c Some time previous to the publication of Mr. Hobhouse's pamphlet, it was announced to the world by a friend of his in the following words: "A full and just account of this *curious* work (viz. Scriptural Revision) will be presented soon to the world by a gentleman *eminently well qualified* to appreciate its value. Jardine's Three Discourses, p. 104.

supposed

supposed curiosity sadly in arrears to our laudable undertakings. In fact, sir, when (as you justly observe) the arguments in many parts of *your* work have already been brought forward, and are opposed (as I readily allow) to old and very common observations in mine; our controversy would gain little by the interest of novelty, nor probably add much to the stock of public information. It might bring on personal dispute, but would not, I fear, lead to particular conviction; it may divide the circle of our acquaintance, but will never promote the harmony of their union. Without the hopes, therefore, and without the desire which you express of amicably pursuing the subject to the bottom, this vindication I pronounce to be my last, and, confiding in the *chief strength* of my position, I shall not harraß myself in preparing answers to every difficulty that can be started, nor in confronting with *distinct* solutions the various

ous

ous objections you may be indefatigable in collecting.

If we meet at all it shall be in a more *general* field of disputation, where I am sure you will be glad to try your strength, and where I am ready to confess I shall never refuse to join the ranks in opposition to you. You rejoice to learn “ that literary societies, “ in defence of the *established religion* and *civil* “ *government* of the country, are forming, if “ not already formed, in London, Oxford, “ and Bath, and are intended to be established “ in every considerable town of England. “ Thus discussion, you think, will be excited, “ and by the collisions of controversy the “ spark of truth will be struck out.”

You had scarcely, sir, committed your wishes to the press, when this *spark of truth* had nearly set the whole kingdom in a blaze. When a disaffection to the national church, by encouraging a disregard for the laws intended for
its

its protection, had given a sanction to the principles of men *avowedly of no religion*, and contributed to forward the designs of those who were equally hostile to *every restriction* of civil society. Since, however, a firm and united attachment to the civil and religious constitution of their country has freed its peaceable inhabitants from the dread of open violation, you will find, sir, in the discussion you are so anxious to promote, that they are more desirous of maintaining their cause by argument, than of protecting it by force; that they are ready to try their principles by the decision of honest conviction, and disdain, as rational agents, an assent to any, but those which reason and conscience force them to approve. You will also find, sir, that the circle of *your society* does not encompass all the talents, nor all the wisdom of the age; that the spirit of free enquiry, and the liberal exercise of his intellectual powers, belongs as much to him who differs from, as to

to him who agrees with you in opinion. You will find our belief protected against sophistical and partial objections. You will find firm friends to what they think *real liberty*, who will not see with indifference the safety of society endangered by the clamours of a *licentious counterfeit*; and firm friends to *real Christianity*, who will preserve unimpaired, as far as they are able, the doctrines they think essential to its preservation.

Such collisions of controversy, sir, you may expect; and such I believe to be the object of the literary societies you allude to. The plan of a Review under their inspection has probably, by this time, fallen into your hands; and as your expectation from their attempts is *not very great*, you may enjoy the benefit of free discussion, and reap the advantages of their incapacity, or their ignorance.

On your appeal to the *candour* of the publick, on purpose to introduce the persecution
of

of Dr. Priestley, I should not comment, but for the mode in which you have conveyed it. To describe the desperate violence of a mob as a scheme of *meditated outrage*, and to charge the *friends of the church* with the disgraceful actions of a drunken and deluded populace, requires something more positive than the language of *insinuation*. When suspicious censure shall have taken the form of absolute proof, it will then be time enough to shew that there is no friend of the church who would wish to shield such a proceeding from its merited infamy, nor refuse to join in pursuing to justice the guilty authors and abettors of it. But the unhappy riots of Birmingham have proved an ample store-house of complaint; and the persecution of Dr. Priestley is issued forth upon suitable occasions, with its attendant train of *arbitrary power, bigotry of priestcraft, divine right of kings, party zeal, and slavish hierarchy*. These terrifying forms are conjured up to cast a gloom

gloom across the sunshine of British happiness, that some zealous advocate for the *people's rights* may come, like Prospero with his wand, to dispel the dreary phantoms of his own creating.

As to your assertion, that there is no class of dissenters so much disliked at present by the members of the established church as the disbelievers of Christ's pre-existence, I believe it to be founded in fact; because there is no class of men so inimical to its interests: and unless you *claim the exclusive privilege of reproach*, when the members of that church are complimented with the name of *sloths and gluttons*;—when they are threatened with a prison, and are accused of *degrading the Deity, and of believing a fiction, which for the magnitude of its absurdity beggars every thing in the superstitions of the world*;—when, in short, to borrow the expressions of a most judicious writer, “indecent and violent attacks have been made on the national
“ liturgy

“liturgy and church; violent from their
“acrimony, and indecent both from their
“violence and their contempt of subsisting
“laws;—when the most uncharitable asper-
“sions have been thrown on the ministers
“of the church for their conformity to her
“doctrines, and on all firm adherents to the
“establishment;”^d—the respect that is due
from man to man must involve such a breach
of it in *general* disapprobation, though the
greatness of the animosity you complain of,
and which conveys in it something personal,
I am an entire stranger to, either in sentiment
or from report.

That you met with disappointment on the
perusal of my letter to Dr. Priestley, does not
surprise me, though, from the causes you
assign for it, much, I think, might have been
spared by a more careful perusal. You com-
pel me, sir, to declare, that in no part of my

^d Burgeſs's Sermon on the Divinity of Chriſt. Oxford, 1790.

work does there exist such a thought as that Dr. Priestley *cannot* be saved; although the ladder of faith which you together with him are labouring to pull down, I may think the safest steps to lead him to the bosom of his Saviour and his God. And to your accusation of my charging with *disingenuity* and *evasion* a person of Dr. Priestley's long-established and well-known respectability; I have only to answer, that it was founded upon proofs of his not meeting fairly the words of scripture, and that his private character has no concern with his printed *arguments*.

To lay down the boundaries between reason and faith, in order to meet your objection *to my idea that religion has a foundation peculiar to itself,—the foundation of faith*, would far exceed the limits of my present design; and I will refer you for a full explanation of my meaning to an Essay upon Faith, by Dr. Rotheram, and to the fourth charge of Dr.

Balguy

Balguy on the distinct Provinces of Reason and Faith. In the words of the latter gentleman I will beg leave to conclude both, as it concisely sums up the purport of his argument, and may serve as a suitable motto to be prefixed to my address to you:—"As
" confused ideas, contradiction to evident
" truths, and subversion of our rational fa-
" culties, make no part in the faith of a
" Christian; so, on the other hand, reason
" ~~itself will direct us not to reject all infor-~~
" mation, though of many things we are
" not informed. The truest philosophy will
" require us to admit the testimony of others
" as one method of information, and to be
" cautious how we oppose to a positive proof
" perfectly understood, conjectures drawn
" from the analogy ~~between~~ cases very diffi-
" cult to be compared, and frequently be-
" yond the reach of human faculties. In all
" such instances, he is the best reasoner, who
" most willingly submits to authority; who
" b " humbly

“humbly and attentively listens to his guide,
“and follows, with patience and perseve-
“rance, wherever he is called by the voice
“of heaven.”

I am, fir, yours, &c.

F. R.



ANSWER

TO

MR. HOBHOUSE'S REPLY.

To Mr. HOBHOUSE.

SIR,

IT appears, you say,* to be the design of my work,—First, To overthrow Dr. Priestley's notion, that *Justin, under the influence of Platonic principles, introduced the doctrine of Christ's Divinity.*

2dly. To invalidate the arguments by which the Doctor, both from Scripture and the testimony of the apostolic writers, seeks to establish *the simple humanity of Christ.*—And,

* Reply. p. 20.

B

3dly. To

3dly, To confute the Doctor's reasoning in support of *the sole Divinity of the Father.*

As the proof of these propositions was undoubtedly the design of my letter to Dr. Priestley, upon this ground I cannot refuse to join issue: and it being your wish (as you add in continuation) to make it appear that I have failed in each of these attempts, let us see how far your inclinations have been gratified, and with what success you have relieved a fortress, you have so generously undertaken to defend.

I certainly did, Sir, as you observe, quote Dr. Priestley (*and in his own express terms*) as representing Justin to have been the first who advanced the Divinity of Christ; and, as a *general* answer to such an unwarrantable position, made an argument of enquiry, *How it happened that St. Paul, who wrote some time previous to the publication of St.*
John's

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John's gospel, (and consequently many years before Justin could have broached his *new doctrine* to corrupt the *Unitarian simplicity* of the Apostle's writings) should have made the *divinity of our Saviour* a fundamental article of a Christian's belief. The structure of my argument requiring no farther investigation, and its solidity depending (as it did by the question) on the only foundation I was desirous it should rest—*an appeal to the Scriptures*; I should not, but for your extraordinary Reply,^b have been obliged to strengthen it with the charge of inattention or disingenuity. I knew that Dr. Priestley had wished to recall Justin from his orthodox opinions, and I also knew that he had been severely handled by the late Mr. Badcock^c for the attempt. I knew that he had endeavoured to depreciate the character of our

^b Reply, p. 23.

^c Vide Monthly Review for Jan. 1784; Dr. Priestley's Remarks on it in his Letters to Dr. Horsley; and the Reviewer's Reply.

Saviour through an alledged confession of Justin himself; and that, speaking of his writings, he had asserted, that *Justin and his contemporaries were only solicitous to make out something like Divinity in the Son, without considering him as united in one substance with the Father.*^a

The refutation, however, of these assertions not at all affecting my proof, which (as I observed before) went to interpret Justin by St. Paul, and not St. Paul by Justin, I spared myself the trouble of any remark. But, when you bring forward a supposition that I *must* have understood Dr. Priestley's assertion in its qualified sense, and that, as I allow St. Paul to have clearly and repeatedly insisted upon the *same* doctrine many years before Justin wrote, consequently St. Paul preached no other doctrine than the

^a Corruptions of Christianity, vol. 1. p. 62.

^b Reply, p. 25.

inferior divinity of the Son to the Father; or, in plain words, when you chuse to suppose me to mean one thing, in order to claim my assent to another; it may be necessary to prove, from the testimony of Justin himself, that when, in words as forcible and expressive as language will admit, the consubstantial divinity of our great Redeemer is most fully and unequivocally asserted, it was not likely I should yield my assent to the decision of Dr. Priestley; nor do I think it possible for you to have submitted to it in this instance, had you deigned to have perused only a few pages of the holy martyr's writings.

At the very beginning almost of his famous Apology to Antoninus, he vindicates the persecuted Christians from the accusation of atheism, by presenting a compleat summary of their faith.

“ With respect to such reputed gods (viz.
 “ the idols and fictitious deities of the hea-
 “ thens) we confess that we are atheists;—
 “ but not so in our belief of the most true
 “ God, the Father of justice, of temperance,
 “ and all other virtues;—Him indeed, and
 “ the Son who came from Him, and revealed
 “ these things to us and to the heavenly
 “ host, we worship and adore, together with
 “ the Holy Spirit, honouring them in word
 “ and in truth.”

After this plain exposition of their tenets,
 he states the moral efficacy of a Christian's
 belief on his whole life and conduct; and
 then, converting the credulous adherence of
 the heathens to their own religious ceremo-
 nies into an exculpation of the Christian
 faith from all charge of absurdity and super-
 stition; proving that the death, crucifixion,

^f Καὶ ομολογοῦμεν τῶν τοιούτων νομιζομένων Θεοῦ Ἀθεοὶ εἶναι, &c.
 Apol. prim. Justin. Thirlby's edition, p. 11.

and resurrection of Jesus, had nothing more repugnant to credibility, than their apotheosis of Mercury, Esculapius, Bacchus, and Hercules;—that his being born of a virgin was what they themselves allowed with regard to Perseus;^c—he enters into the dignified cause of his own religious persuasion; he appeals to the writings^d of Moses for a proper knowledge of man's creation, and his Creator; he traces the description of the first created matter of Plato, and many other parts of his philosophy, to the source of these sacred records; and after bearing testimony to the Logos or Word of God, as assisting in the formation of the universe, as being also the Angel and the Messenger of the Old Covenant; he proves him from the prophetic predictions concerning him, and the full accomplishment of them at his birth, to

^c Justin. Edit. Thirlb. p. 32-3. Hobhouse, p. 44.

^d Justin. p. 86.

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have descended upon earth in a human form, as the Saviour and Redeemer of the New Covenant; and though personally and numerically different from the Father, not so in nature, as being begotten of the very essence of the Father. "Therefore (says he) "the Jews,¹ thinking it was always the Father of all things who conversed with Moses, when it was the Son, who is named both Angel and Messenger, are justly censured by the Holy Spirit, and by Christ himself, as being ignorant both of the Father and Son. For they that say the Son is the Father, appear neither to know the Father, nor that the Father of the universe hath a Son, *who being the firstborn of God, is also God.*" Here, Sir, is no equivocal reasoning about the dignity of our Saviour, no solicitude to make out something like a Divinity in the Son of God, but an express and

¹ Justin. Apol. prim. p. 94. Ἰουδαῖοι οὐκ ᾔκησαντες αὐτῷ τὸν Πατέρα, &c.

direct

direct avowal of the Catholic Faith, God of God,* Light of Light, Very God of very God. And a positive assent to the direction of our Saviour himself, that all men should honour him even as they honour the Father.

But let us proceed a little farther with Justin. Every step we take in the writings of this famous convert to Christianity, will exhibit the Saviour of the world in fuller majesty, and in all the glory of one in whom

* In another part of his work, Dialog. p. 267. Justin compares the Logos to one fire lighted from another fire, which partakes of all without diminishing any of its properties. I do not adduce this as in any way tending to give us a determinate idea of the Divine Union, because, when we are arguing upon the nature of a thing whose essence we know not, every illustration from material objects will be always imperfect and frequently absurd. But I adduce it as a convincing proof of Justin's sentiments concerning our Saviour, who believed Him to be, as our poet expresses it, he

"Who, disembosom'd from the Father, bows

"The heaven of heavens to kiss the distant earth,

"And to close all, omnipotently kind,

"Takes his delight among the sons of men."

YOUNG'S CONSOLATION,

the

the fullness of the Godhead dwelt. In his dialogue with Trypho, an unbelieving Jew, he applies to Jesus the scriptural terms of *King, Priest, God, Lord, Angel or Messenger, Man, Captain of the Host of Israel, their Rock of Defence, born an Infant, first suffering, and then returning into glory, and possessing an everlasting kingdom.*¹ Again he says of him, *that he was before the morning-star and the moon; and who being made flesh, condescended to be born of a virgin of the house of David;*^m—that by this dispensation, the serpent, who was first an evil doer, and the angels, who are like unto him, might be destroyed.

I think, Sir, we need not trace the lineaments of our Saviour's godhead any farther, and it is really painful to urge quotations again and again, to disprove what, if (as I said before) you had deigned to examine,

¹ Ο γὰρ Χριστὸς βασιλεὺς, &c. Dial. Tryph. p. 204.

^m Ος καὶ πρὸ Εωσφορε καὶ Σελήνης ην, &c. p. 227.

you would never have presumed to assert; and forgive me for adding, that to you who assume the privilege, and possess the capacity of judging, it is no justification to have relied upon evidence you were capable of scrutinizing, or to have trusted to any proofs which it was in your power to investigate. If it would spare you any trouble, I would refer you for the sentiments of Justin to Bishop Bull, or to the Extracts (which, out of respect to the memory of a much-revered uncle, you will allow me to call a sort of Family Expository) you will find in the Vindication of the Doctrine of the Trinity, by the late President of Corpus. Should you ever dip into either of these works, and compare the faithfulness of the copy with the original, permit me to sum up the evidence in the parting words of Justin himself to the incredulous Trypho:—" If ye had " known these things, O Trypho, ye would " not have blasphemed Him who is now
 " come,

" come, hath been born, hath suffered, and
 " hath ascended into heaven; who shall also
 " appear again, and then shall your twelve
 " tribes mourn: for if ye had understood
 " the sayings of the prophets, ye had not
 " denied him to be God, *the Son of the only*
 " *and unbegotten and indescribable God.*"^a

Such, Sir, are the opinions of this holy
 martyr; and all of them being referred in-
 variably to scriptural evidence, will put you
 to some difficulty, I think, to connect with
 the adulterated^o notions of Plato. How far

^a Justin, p. 408. *Εὐαγγελιστὴς ὁ Τετυφωγ, &c.*

^o I scruple not to call them adulterated notions, because a very
 small scope of reading will serve to shew that all the sublime phi-
 losophy of Greece, more particularly that of Pythagoras, Socrates,
 and Plato, was only a corrupted current from the source of Hebrew
 theology. And whilst the cry of platonising fathers (among
 which Justin is ranked the first) is urged against the early defenders
 of the orthodox faith, the reverse of the argument is the fact, and
 the New Testament, by combining the Patriarchal, the Mosaic, and
 Christian dispensation, in one and the same harmonious confederacy,
 for the salvation of mankind, points out at once the origin of Pla-
 tonism, and the sad difference betwixt human wisdom and divine.

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they assimilate with the doctrines of St. Paul, will appear when we come to that part of our discussion: for the present, that we may not interrupt the argument, I would wish to dismiss every sort of scriptural illustration, and pursue the extraneous testimony something farther. Nor indeed can I willingly part with Justin, till I have released your mind from that surprise which you say I occasioned, by adducing a passage from his writings as an irrefragable proof of the general belief in the divinity of Christ, and not confronting it at the same time with the answer which Dr. Priestley had himself given to it. If you will refer to my Letter,^p you will find, in a subjoined note, that I did allude to the very passage, and submitted to the reader's judgment the inferences which Dr. Priestley drew from it. And though, like a zealous champion, you fight in his armour, and produce at full length the whole

^p See Reply p. 39; and Script. Revif. p. 13.

of his reply, yet after what has already been advanced from the works of Justin; and when also, in the subsequent passage to that now in question, the very baptismal form and words of our Church is adduced as a regenerating sign of a Christian's faith, I feel no farther answer necessary to such ungrounded insinuations.

Again, you trust to another assertion of Dr. Priestley,² and he in his turn trusted to the assertion of Episcopius. You repeat after him, "that it may be shewn, from other parts of Justin's works, that he could never *here* have intended to say that the people of his time entertained the same belief as himself as to the godhead of Christ. He fancied that, in his interpretation of the Logos as a person, he was favoured by supernatural assistance; and says, that he

² *Εν' Ονοματιος γαρ του Παλτος, &c.* Just. p. 89.

¹ Reply p. 40.

" thinks

"thinks it his duty to communicate the same
 "benefit to others, which God had imparted
 "to him." And then you come with a ques-
 "tion; "Could Justin have taken up this idea,
 "if the general sentiment of his day as to
 "Christ was the same as his own? Or does
 "he reason like one who believed that his
 "opinion had the sanction of the majority,
 "when he says,—Jesus may still be the
 "Christ," &c. &c. Permit me to lay aside
 your mutilated quotation, and to place the
 whole passage before the reader, that our an-
 swer may be as fair as I trust it will be
 decisive.

"Now, Trypho, I do not fail in my proof
 "that this is the Christ of God, though I
 "should not be able to shew both that he
 "pre-existed the Son of the Creator of all
 "things, *being God, and that he was be-*
 "*gotten man of the virgin.* For it being
 "notwithstanding every way demonstrated,
 "that

" that whosoever he is, he is the Christ of
 " God; though I do not prove that he pre-
 " existed, and condescended according to
 " the council or purpose of the Father to
 " be begotten of like passions with us being
 " incarnate; you can only in justice say that
 " I am mistaken in this: but you cannot
 " deny that he is the Christ, though he
 " only seems to be man begotten of man,
 " and be proved to be made Christ by elec-
 " tion. For there are even some of *our sort*
 " who confess him to be the Christ, and yet
 " affirm that he is Man of Men. I am not
 " of the same opinion with these men, nor
 " are there many of my persuasion who will
 " say as they do. For we are exhorted by
 " Christ not to give ourselves up to human
 " arguments or doctrines, but to those which
 " were preached by the holy prophets, and
 " taught by himself."

* Just. p. 233. Ἡδὴ μάλιστα οἱ Τρεῦσιν εἶπον, οὐκ ἀπολλύσθαι το τοι-
 οῦτον εἶναι Χριστόν, &c.

It certainly, Sir, requires more intellectual ingenuity than I possess, to discover in this train of reasoning any thing inconsistent with the *generally** accepted belief of Christianity; but it will require the utmost exertion of yours to support in the face of such evidence the *qualified sense of Dr. Priestley, and the something like divinity in the Son*, which he affirms to have been the opinion of Justin." I suspect, Sir, that you drew your inference from my presumed concession, before you had examined this passage, and even now would not have quoted it for such a purpose, had you attended as much to the spirit as you have done to the letter of it.—Justin is arguing with an unbelieving Jew, who ridi-

* When I say *generally* accepted belief of Christianity, it is to answer Mr. Hobhouse's question, whether Justin's belief could be the *general* sentiment of his day, or his opinion have the *sanction of the majority*? I trust I do not mistake his meaning to be the *general* sentiment of the *Christian Church*; and the sanction of the majority, the sanction of the greater part of that religious community.

" Vid. Sup. p. 4.

culed his scriptural account of the Messiah as absurd and incredible. I know,* says he, the discourse seems strange, and especially to those of your nation or kindred, who are not inclined either to understand or perform the things of God, but those of your own teachers; as God himself cries out against you. But if you reject the prophetic evidence I have already brought, and shall hereafter produce, of the divine nature of Christ; yet if I force you to acknowledge that he was the *promised Messiah*; I prove enough against you, and you must then allow the Mosaic ritual to give place to the Christian dispensation.† This is the sum and substance of his argument. But to place it in a still stronger light, let us change for a moment the personages concerned in it, and suppose a zealous advocate for the doctrines of our Church endea-

* Just. 233.

† Whoever wishes to see this objection fully answered, will consult, with no small degree of satisfaction, Bishop Bull's *Judicium Eccles. Cathol.* cap. 7.

vouring to convert a Jew to a belief in Christ, in precisely the same language. Would your supposition then have any weight? Or because he should say that *even some of our sort*, professing themselves to be, and assuming the name of Christians, yet deny the Saviour of the world to be any thing more than man; would the inference hold good, that the *general* sentiment of his day as to Christ was not the same as his own? Or that his opinions; however controverted in a few instances, had not the sanction of the majority. I think, Sir, I may safely alledge such a position to be untenable, and that you will find the primitive belief in a Saviour to have been much the same as in these modern times; corrupted by professing friends, and renounced by incredulous enemies. But that the symbol or rule of faith, which Justin undertakes to defend, was that of the Christian church in those days; and that no religious communion was held with those who avow-

edly departed from it, we have his own authority and his own explicit language to declare.

Q “ There are then (says he) and have been
 “ many profelytes to Christianity, who have
 “ been taught atheistical and blasphemous
 “ tenets and practices. We have given them
 “ their denomination from those from whom
 “ every doctrine and opinion sprung. Some
 “ of them teach one way, and others an-
 “ other, of blaspheming the Maker of the
 “ universe, and Christ whom he had foretold
 “ should come, *even the God of Abraham,*
 “ *Isaac, and Jacob.* We communicate with
 “ none of these, as knowing them to be
 “ atheistical, impious, unjust, and irregular,
 “ and instead of worshippers of Jesus, only
 “ nominal confessors of him. They call
 “ themselves Christians indeed, as the hea-
 “ thens give the name of God to things made
 “ with hands, and communicate in unlawful
 “ and

“ and impious mysteries. Some of them are
 “ called Marcionites, some Valentinians, some
 “ Basilidians, some Saturnilians, and others
 “ by other names, every one being denomi-
 “ nated from the author of his opinion.”

We will now, Sir, take our leave of Justin,
 on whose writings I should not have dwelt
 so long, but from the conviction that much
new matter might be suggested to you, though
 the greatest part of it has been frequently
 and repeatedly urged by the separate de-
 fenders of our established faith; and satis-
 fied that the more you investigate, the more
 fully you will be convinced that the faith of
 the holy convert was the received and pub-
 lick faith of the church; that he did not ob-
 trude a *new Saviour* on the Christian world
 dressed up in the garb of Platonism, but ex-
 hibited the genuine offspring of the Father
 in his true and dignified character: I may

² Justin. Dial. p. 208. Εἰς τὴν οὐν καὶ ἐργασίᾳ, &c.

hope much from the candour, but can dread little upon this ground from the vindication of your sentiments. The fundamental article of a Christian's belief, *the Divinity of his Saviour*, was the firm and rooted belief of Justin, to which he arrived not by any *supernatural assistance*,* but by searching, with the humility of a Christian convert, those sacred records which, through the assistance of divine grace, had led him into the ways of truth; and the fullness of which benefit, that of understanding the scriptures, he wishes freely to impart to others.

I trust that without the imputation of arrogance, I may now reject as erroneous your

* Mr. Hobhouse, to invalidate the testimony of Justin, says, He was one who fancied himself to be favoured by supernatural assistance; and in his note to prove it, produces a passage that certainly calls for his own construction to convey any such idea. It is, however, curious to observe the inconsistency of such assertion. If the Platonic doctrines had opened Justin's eyes to the sense of the Scriptures, *the immediate inspiration of heaven* was surely unnecessary to unfold their meaning. Vide Reply, p. 41.

opinions with respect to Justin; nor do I think you maintain your argument with greater skill against my second position:—

That the doctrine of the sole humanity of Christ, as stated by Dr. Priestley, was entirely repugnant to holy writ, and opposed also by the very testimony of those historical records be brought to support it. In short, Sir, having invested our blessed Lord with that sublimity and splendor in which the holy martyr has arrayed him, I shall proceed to shew, that so far from his being the *first* who advanced the *divinity of Christ*, the whole current of scripture, and the testimony of those *who are called Apostolic Writers*, run with the fullest tide of evidence to expand and swell the majesty of our Saviour's character. To keep, however, our *scriptural ground* (as was before remarked) free from all incumbrances, we will confine our view to the disputed points of apostolic reference, and try the primitive faith of the church by the confession of its appointed pastors.

To

[24]

To prove that St. John, by the expression *coming in the flesh*, could mean to assert nothing more than our *Lord's manhood*, Dr. Priestley adduced as collateral evidence a *similar* phrase from Polycarp in his letter to the Philippians ; and then, converting the Bishop into a *Humanitarian*, (for I will here beg leave to borrow your own specifick term) his language is plausibly made explanatory of that of the holy Apostle. The deduction we allow to be fair, did the premises happen to be consistent ; but the *very same passage* having been introduced in my former argument, as marking with the boldest features the *divinity of our Saviour* ; and our comparative inferences from it, being already before the reader, I willingly leave their separate merits or imperfections to his decision : and depend upon it there is no judicious one, who shall refer to this letter of Polycarp, but who will discover some *inter-*

• Vide Scripural Rev. p. 25 ; and Hobhouse's Reply, p. 152.

nal proofs against your objections, which will require something more than ingenuity to elude. At the close of it he says, The letters which Ignatius himself transmitted to you, and as many others as we had by us, we have sent agreeable to your request, subjoined to this epistle; from which you will derive much benefit, for they contain lessons of faith, perseverance, and all Christian edification. You must therefore either prove these very letters of Ignatius now extant to be spurious, or such expressions as the following:—I glorify Jesus Christ, the God who hath given you so great wisdom,—WHO WAS TRULY OF THE RACE OF DAVID ACCORDING TO THE FLESH, and the Son of God according to the will and power of God.† And again, There is one physician who is born a corporeal and a spiritual physician, begotten and unbegotten, MADE ACCORDING TO THE*

* Polycarp. Epist. ad Philippenes subiecta Epist. Ignatii. Oxon. edit. p. 17. *Tas Epistolas Ignatius tas pemptusas, &c.*

† Ignatii Epist. ad Smyrnaeos, p. 21. *Δοξαζω Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν τὸν Θεόν, &c.*

FLESH,

FLESH, who was the immortal God, and the true life: Such expressions as these, I say, unless you disprove their authenticity, must be held to be a fair and candid interpretation of the sentiments of Polycarp, more especially too when in a letter immediately addressed to his disciple, Ignatius says,—*Knowing the firmness of your faith, (or rather the eagerness of your contention for truth) I have sent you but few letters of exhortation. And then, with an entire confidence in the choice of Polycarp for a fit person to be entrusted with the care of the church at Antioch, he concludes with these consolatory words:—I salute him whom you think worthy to go into Syria; the grace of God shall be even with him, and with Polycarp who sent him.—I pray always for your welfare (or fare you well) ON JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD.*^e

^e Ep. ad Ephesios, p. 47. Εἰς Ιακωβὸν ὅτι Σαρμικός ἢ πνευματικός, &c.

^f Ignat. Ep. ad Polycarpum, p. 39. Εἰδὼς οὖν ὑμῶν τὸ Σύνθημα τῆς Ἀληθείας, &c.

^g Ἀσπάζομαι τὸν μέλλοντα καλεῖσθαι, &c.

To your subsequent remark on the supposed orthodoxy of Polycarp's faith, I feel myself called upon to say a few words, because it involves in it a charge of misrepresentation. In my appeal to the last prayer previous to his death, as the most convincing test of a man's religious sentiments, I am accused of citing a passage differently stated from Eusebius, without having first established the genuineness of the reading. But you seem to forget that when a quotation is fairly applied from an allowed historical record,¹ you must either admit the testimony, or bring sufficient proofs of its incongruity. Those you have exhibited, afford but little advantage on the side of Eusebius, and what is *still more extraordinary*, the very *miraculous* parts of the narration, with which you endeavour to shake the veracity of Pionius,¹ are

¹ Ruffel's Patres Apostolici, p. 352. §. 14. Vid. Hob. p. 164.

¹ Compare the letter attributed to Pionius with the history of the transaction as recorded by Eusebius, lib. iv. c. 15.

enumerated *word for word*, in the *more credible* relation of Eusebius; so that, without having consulted the author to whom you trust, and resting upon one solitary circumstance you fancy may be useful to your cause, you endeavour to divert the course of evidence to the bias of your own inclinations, and impeach the authority of history with the queries of frivolous exception. Far, however, from being inclined to cavil where I wish to convince, I am ready to rest the argument on your own supposition, and to take the reading as you state it from Eusebius.

“On this account, and above all, I laud
 “thee, I bless thee, I glorify thee, through
 “the eternal high priest Jesus Christ thy be-
 “loved Son, through whom, to Thee toge-
 “ther with Him in the Holy Spirit, be glory
 “now and for evermore.”* Let this part of the doxology, you say, be looked upon as unquestionable, and it is thus to be explained:

* Vid. Hobhouse's quotation from Eusebius, p. 161.

Glory is ascribed to the Father as the *ὁς Παντοκράτωρ*, or God Omnipotent, to whom the whole prayer is addressed. Glory is ascribed to Christ, as having been constituted a high priest *for ever*, or through all future ages! What, sir, glory to the Son, and that in an equal degree with the Father? (for the words are, *TO THEE TOGETHER WITH HIM*,)—glory to the God Omnipotent, together with a creature formed like you and me, and only endowed with heavenly gifts? Surely *the simplicity* of your creed cannot reconcile itself to such blasphemy! As to the third person mentioned, you leave him totally out of the question; and we are to presume, I imagine, that *ἐν Πνεύματι Ἁγίῳ*, in the Holy Spirit, and which you will observe also, without any breach of classical propriety, might be rendered *with*, means only to pray with the heart, or with the spirit assisted by divine grace; or in short, any thing but a compre-

¹ Reply, p. 162.

hension of the Holy Ghost in one communion of glory. I would, however, beg leave to remind you, that the doxology, as it stands in Eusebius, is so far from contradicting the one to which you object, that it bears precisely the same signification, only couched in its more ancient form.—Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, in the unity of the Spirit.^m The Father and the Son are one in the unity of the Spirit.ⁿ

But a more unexceptionable testimony still remains, and that is the confession of the Smyrnæans themselves, at the conclusion of this very epistle. They cannot be supposed to have mistaken the meaning of their holy bishop, or to have been ignorant of the tenets which he had so long promulgated amongst them. They close their narration with these words:—Brethren, we wish you

^m Vid. Petavius de Trin. lib. 7. c. 12. n. 8.

ⁿ Athenagore Legat. pro Christianis.

all health, and to walk in the word of Jesus Christ, according to the gospel, *with* whom be glory to God, *both* the Father and the Holy Ghost.

But we now come to another serious cause of complaint, and that is the misconstruction of language. I certainly did charge Dr. Priestley with suppressing, in his account of this venerable bishop's martyrdom, what I deemed to be a very material evidence against his opinions, namely, *the reason why* the Jews were urgent that the body should not be

° Epist. Ecclesiae Smyrnenfis de Martyrio Polycarpi ad finem. If Mr. H. objects to this close of the epistle, because it happens to be omitted in the narration of Eusebius, he cannot by his own confession object to it as the work of Pionius; and as he suffered martyrdom also for the faith at Smyrna soon after Polycarp, (vid. Euseb. l. iv. c. 15.) he may at least be produced as an instance of one who acknowledged the Divinity of Christ before the time of Justin. I would also add, that the character of Pionius, as given by Eusebius, is such as would make one cautious of doubting his testimony; and even if we suppose him through religious zeal to have exaggerated the miraculous occurrences of Polycarp's death, he could not have mistaken the religious opinions which occasioned it, and for which he himself suffered.

given

given to the Christians; lest, abandoning their crucified chief, they should begin to worship him, viz. Polycarp. And you step forwards not to vindicate the Doctor from the charge of omission, but to question the propriety of my interpretation. The words Σεβειν and Προσκυνειν, are frequently used, you say,^p to denote no more than an act of homage from one man to another;—and by what means, you ask me, shall I make it appear, that they bear in this place any other signification? By a means, Sir, that I think will put your criticism to the blush, by appealing to the constant and invariable application of these words in every heathen and Christian writer, where an act of adoration was to be represented. All their derivatives, Σεβας, Σεβασμα, Σεβαστος, Προσκυνησις, Προσκυνηλος, have the same divine allusion, and whenever they are used in a secondary sense, from the dignity of the object to which

^p Reply, p. 168.

they are applied, always point out the sublimity of their derivation. In a passage I quoted from Justin, the very words are addressed to the Father and the Son in the same phrase; and, however you may ridicule the superstition of the belief, still you must allow them to express, in the sense of Justin; a community of worship.

But by your own concession, you may reply, they are sometimes used in a secondary sense; and as the object in question is *certainly a dignified one*, why should they not be used so here? Because, sir, words cannot more forcibly *contrast the highest esteem due from man to man* with the *adoration* we are called upon to pay to our Saviour; not° knowing that we can never forsake Christ, or worship any other. *For we adore him as being the Son of God.* But the martyrs in his cause we deservedly (or worthily) love as disciples and

° Euseb. lib. iv. c. 15.

imitators of their Lord, on account of their insuperable endearment to their King and Master. I think, sir, I could defy the powers of the Greek language to express the act of adoration in stronger terms; and if you were called upon to convey the sense of divine homage, I will venture to assert you could not do it in more apt or forcible language. With the liberty of interpretation you assume, there hardly exists in any language an expression that may not be perverted from its obvious meaning; and should any one tell a Humanitarian, that I *worshipped* and *adored* my Saviour, might he not with equal justice suppose me to avow only the same sort of reverence I thought due to a parent, or the adoration one professed to pay to any beloved object. In short, sir, there is hardly a school-boy out of his grammar, that would construe the passage as you interpret it; and if he did, there is not a school-master in the kingdom who would not correct him.

But,

But, sir, we can proceed a step farther in our opposition to this *extraordinary criticism*; we can silence every doubt of opinion with the *imperious tone of fact*. We can prove that adoration *was* paid by the community of Christians to their Saviour, long before the tragical end of Polycarp furnished us with the short and interesting narrative. There is a letter still extant of Pliny the younger to Trajan, (and the frequency of its citation cannot have left you ignorant of it) in which, finding the ill success of violent measures, and astonished at the undaunted firmness of the martyrs, he represents to his sovereign the insufficiency of persecution to check the progress of Christian idolatry; and which only consisted (as he affirms) in their assembling on an appointed day before daylight, and alternately *singing hymns to Christ as God*.^p This, Eusebius in a later period quotes for historical fact, and, by quoting,

^p Carmenq; Christo quasi Deo dicere. Vid. Plin. ep. x. p. 97.

corroborates thus:—*They sang hymns to Christ according to the form of worshipping God.*¹

Many other circumstantial relations, and those too from heathen writers, might be brought in confirmation of the early adoration of Christ's divinity; but being posterior in date, it would be needless to produce them, till this *single* but *stubborn* evidence be set aside. You will also recollect that Pliny was sent to Pontus, in quality of præfect or governor of the province of Bithynia, at the very beginning of the second century; so that if his testimony be true, Justin is again proved not to have been the *first* who advanced the divinity of Christ.

I come now, sir, to your next section, your examination of my quotations from Irenæus.

¹ 'Τὸν Χριστὸν Θεὸν Διὰ τῆς ὑμνῶν. Euseb. Eccl. Hist. l. iii. cap. 3, p. 128. As this corroborating remark is borrowed from Mr. Whitaker's *Arianism Disclosed*, p. 272, I cannot refrain from paying him that tribute of admiration, for acuteness of penetration and depth of research, which I think he deserves from the whole Christian world.

He talks too plainly to be construed into Socinianism, and therefore, in the judgment of Dr. Priestley, he has copied the error of Justin in personifying the Logos. As the pupil of Polycarp, I did think the argument fair to illustrate by his opinions those of his beloved master. And with such irrefragable evidence of a belief in the divine nature of Christ as I produced from his works, I did not hesitate to pronounce, that if Polycarp was a Socinian in sentiment, the disciple must have strangely misconceived his master's instructions, or his memory must have been very fallacious.

But you see nothing extraordinary in this change; and though Irenæus plunges from the simplicity of *humanitarianism* to the depth of *trinitarian idolatry*; though he abandons at once all the plain instructions of his religious teacher, for the *wonderful* and *mysterious doctrines* of the *philosophizing*

Justin, yet as he wrote forty or fifty years after him, was well acquainted with his writings, and held both them and the author in great estimation, he might have conceived that Polycarp in never mentioning any other doctrine than Christ's manhood, instructed him in all that he knew; but that Justin, by means of a more perfect revelation from above, had been enabled to enlarge the bounds of religious knowledge.

This you call an answer to my assertions concerning Irenæus, and then add: "Having taken notice of your objection to our system, let me in return bestow some attention upon yours:—If Polycarp believed in the divinity of Christ, and instructed Irenæus in that doctrine, would not the latter have added to his other arguments, that there was one which ought to decide the question, namely, that the same doctrine had been communicated to him by the venerable Bishop of Smyrna, the disciple of John." And a

^f Reply, p. 171.

^g Reply, p. 172.

satisfactory answer to such a question would be to reverse the form of it, and to call upon you to resolve, why Irenæus, if he *had* been taught by his master the *simple humanity* of Christ, should have so boldly diffused afterwards the *poison of corrupted faith*, without a single word of apology for his great alteration of sentiment, and without endeavouring to account for the errors of his formerly revered master. I am afraid, sir, you will not be able to bring to decide a solution to this enquiry, (and which certainly is the most natural of the two) as I shall to yours. And as I would not willingly secrete from you any information, *my more compleat knowledge of the author*,[†] you suppose, may afford me, permit me to announce to you, upon the credit of it, that if you had deigned to examine before you had undertaken to dispute, you would never have hazarded these unnecessary, I would almost say unpardonable, queries.

[†] Reply, p. 173.

You

You would have found, that whatever was the belief of Irenæus, he does appeal to his beloved master for a confirmation of its truth. In his epistle to Florianus, as cited by Eusebius,^a his language is that of a mind so deeply impressed with the early lessons he had received, that nothing could erase them; he dwells even upon his form, his attitude, the place in which he used to sit, and, with a fondness of recollection, seems to hang again upon every word he had uttered:—These things, says he, by the mercy of God shewed towards me at that time, I diligently and attentively listened to, and committed them not to paper and writing, but to the inmost reflections of my heart.^b And in another part of his writings,^c he introduces Polycarp as one who was not only instructed by the Apostles, and in habits of intercourse with many who had seen the Lord, but was also constituted bishop of

^a Euf. Hist. Eccles. p. 138.

^b Euseb. Hist. p. 139. *Tavla nē rois, &c.*

^c Irenæus, l. iii. c. 3. p. 233.

Smyrna by the Apostles themselves, had always taught the apostolic, the *only true doctrine*, and delivered it down to the Church.

I may now, I think, safely leave your comparison of the two creeds, and the *judicious reflection* of Dr. Sykes, that since they do not agree in words, nor consist of the same articles, they cannot be looked upon as the creeds of any church, to their full weight. The omission of the precise expression, *resurrection of the body*, may have served Dr. Sykes's *particular purpose*,^z but can bring no advantage to your cause. *Both* are in direct opposition to your favourite tenets; and the summary of Christian faith in the latter statement, so *fully* includes the *whole detail* of the former, that *both* stand forwards in convincing evidence of a Saviour's divinity, and the avowed doctrines of our church in the earliest ages of Christianity. Should the

^z Vide Dr. Sykes on the Resurrection of the Body.

reader, however, look no farther than to the translation you offer, permit me to set him right in one particular: In the second creed, but which is only a short compendium of the former, when you say, "Who being received into glory, will come to save those who are saved, and to judge those who are judged;" I think much of the force of the author's meaning is lost. It should rather be,—"Who rising again, and being eminently received into glory, will come *the Saviour* of those who are saved, and the *Judge* of those who are judged."

The quotation of the passage from Ter-
tullian, to prove a contradictory belief of the
Church in *his* time to that which we pre-
tend to have existed in the time of Irenæus,
would call for no answer, after what has been
advanced by Dr. Priestley, and replied to by
Dr. Horsley, had it not served to introduce

* Irenæus, lib. iii. c. 4. p. 242.

a note of objection to some assertions of Mr. Kett, whose Bampton Lectures do us full justice to the cause of Christianity, as they do credit to the talents and zeal of its defender. The passage, as you quote it, runs thus: "The simple, the ignorant, and unlearned, who are always the greater part of the body of Christians, since the rule of faith transfers the worship of many gods to the one true God, not understanding that the unity of God is to be maintained with the economy, dread this economy, imagining that this number and disposition of a Trinity is a division of the Unity. They, therefore, will have it that we are worshippers of two and even of three Gods, but that they are the worshippers of one God only. We, they say, hold the monarchy; even the Latins, and the most ignorant amongst them, have learned to bawl out for the monarchy, as if they understood that Greek word, and the Greeks themselves

“themselves will not understand the occasion.” Having adduced this passage, you wonder that Mr. Kett should alledge that it is a proof of the number of *Patristians* at this period, not of the number of those who held the doctrine of the *modern unitarian*. But surely, sir, you would not have differed so widely in opinion, had you examined the context before you gave the translation. The *major pars credentium*, rendered, as it should be, the greater part of *believers*; not the greater part of *Christians*, would have suggested to you that Tertullian is not talking of Christians, but heretics: of those who, if they assumed the name, denied the fundamental doctrines of their religion. What those doctrines were, we have already seen from Irenæus, and you will at least allow Tertullian to have been of the same belief. Then how stands the argument? The numerous converts, says he, from heathen idolatry to the worship of one Supreme Being, not

not being able at first to comprehend a distinction of nature in a unity of essence, express reluctance against the mystery of the Trinity; and Praxeas, taking advantage of their simplicity and ignorance, has been endeavouring to change their *idolatry into deism*, by making *Christ God*, and not separating the divine from the human existence of our Redeemer. If this be not the sum of Tertullian's reasoning, and if he did not understand Praxeas as encouraging Patripassian doctrines, his whole discourse is the most absurd and ridiculous that can be imagined. Every part of it is urged against this particular doctrine, with incredible force and ingenuity; and when you assert that Tertullian allows that Praxeas did not say that the Father was crucified and died, I must again accuse you of want of attention to the subject you are discussing. He is reducing Praxeas to an absurdity. He argues,^b If you disallow the

^b Tertullian adv. Prax. ad Finem.

human nature of Christ, and say that Christ is God, you have no way of escaping from the blasphemy of such an assertion. Either the Father is *passible* or *impassible*; and to qualify your opinion, by urging that when the Son suffered the Father must also suffer with him, does not acquit you of the charge.— You say that the Father is *compassible*; why then are you afraid to say he was *passible* whom you allow to be *compassible*? *Times dicere passibilem quem dicis compassibilem.* For what is partaking of suffering other than to suffer with another? *Quid est enim compati quam cum alio pati.* Moreover, you not only blaspheme because you say the Father died, but also because he was crucified. The curse of the cross we understand, inasmuch as Christ became a curse for us; but you, making Christ the Father, blaspheme against the Father. In short, either the Son in his human capacity suffered distinct from the Father, when in his last moments he called
out,

out, My God, my God;—or if the Father was *compassibilis*, suffered in his person, to what God did he exclaim?

You will now, sir, allow me to think with Mr. Kett, that if the modern Unitarian becomes the disciple of Praxeas, he must be combated with the weapons with which Praxeas was defeated, and that you vainly anticipate his candour in acknowledging that he has been mistaken with respect to the opinions of Praxeas.

But let me beseech you, sir, in behalf of that truth you profess to seek, not to rest it on a solitary passage, or on any particular expression; and if you will consult Tertulian, you will find that he is contending for the faith delivered to the saints, and that the language of the Church was far removed from Socinian interpretation. Above all, I would recommend to your perusal his opinion

of

of heretics, among which Praxeas may be reckoned, in which you may find some lessons applicable to the present day.

In your observations on the reputed epistle of Barnabas, you take a singular mode of defending your friend. First, you say, "that no inference is to be drawn from this epistle as the work of Barnabas, until its authenticity be established." As far as my argument was concerned, sir, no inference was attempted to be drawn from it, as the immediate composition of Barnabas; the conclusion (and the only one insisted upon) was grounded on the acknowledgment of Dr. Priestley himself,—“That whoever was the author of this epistle, it was probably written soon after the destruction of Jerusalem.”^d In that case, according to his own concession, it was urged, that it could not be

^b De Præscript. Hæretic.

^c Reply, p. 180.

^d History of the Christian Church, p. 221.

refused as a proof of the *early* belief in the divinity of Christ. You deny, however, the validity of any such conclusion; and, "though the work should indubitably assert the divinity and incarnation of the Son of God, yet unless its publication can be ascertained to have been *prior to that of Justin,*" you contend that it cannot be used as evidence against the opinions of Dr. Priestley; so that, notwithstanding a period of near seventy years elapsed between the destruction of Jerusalem and the publication of the works of Justin, and which should seem to afford the utmost latitude to the expression *soon after,* still, if we cannot prove the letter to have been extant *prior* to the writings of the holy martyr, the argument is not admitted to be either fair or conclusive. In other words, the construction of the phrase, *soon after the destruction of Jerusalem,* has, on your supposition, no reference at all to the *first seventy years* subsequent to

the calamitous event, but is wholly included within the *last sixty*; namely, from the time in which Justin wrote, to A. D. 200, since, before the expiration of that term, you are forced to allow the existence of the letter.

Permit me to resume the argument for a moment, that I may place it before the reader in its full light. The downfall of Jerusalem was accomplished A. D. 74: the writings of Justin began to make their appearance A. D. 140. Upon Dr. Priestley's own concession, that the letter of Barnabas was written *soon after* this dreadful completion of our Saviour's prophecy, the obvious inference was, that it then was a proof of the early belief in the divinity of Christ. In order to evade this inference, you tell us, "That as there is nothing certain about the epistle, but that it came out *after* the destruction of Jerusalem, the overthrow of which is there mentioned, and *before* the

" year

“ year 200, about which time Clemens Alex-
 “ andrinus wrote, who quotes this letter,
 “ but classes it among the apocrypha; it
 “ might therefore have made its appearance
 “ after 140, when Justin’s work was given
 “ to the world.” That is, by changing the
 assertion of Dr. Priestley into an assumption
 of your own, by suppressing the restrictive
 clause *soon after*, and by extracting a sort of
general question out of a *particular* affirma-
 tion, you lay down *new data* of enquiry,
 strangely inapplicable to the declaration of
 Dr. Priestley, and totally inconsistent with the
 mode of reasoning which had been adopted.

Before you had challenged any proof of
 this sort, had you allowed Dr. Priestley to
 have granted *too much*, or to have been some-
 thing *unguarded in his expression*, I would have
 attempted to shew you, though the letter be
 allowed to be a forgery, the probability of
 its being published *before* the time of Justin

Martyr. For to believe (and if there be any weight in your supposition, we are constrained to believe it) that 140 years after the death of our Saviour, and the progressive establishment of the Christian faith in almost every part of the known world; after the promulgation of doctrines delivered by the Apostles to the several churches, and guarded with the utmost zeal and vigilance by their coadjutors and successors; to believe, I say, that *in less than half that time*, a converted heathen should entirely overturn the system of faith, and effect so total a change in the sentiments of the Christian world, that no disciple of the Apostles could be found bold enough to step forwards and oppose his *blasphemous tenets*;—that with a sweeping hand of innovation he should *at once* have destroyed every vestige of *unitarian simplicity*, and brought over its followers to the altars of *trinitarian idolatry*;—that Polycarp, who underwent a cruel death as well as Justin, in support of his

his faith, who was alive when Justin published, and defended the doctrine of the Son's divinity;—that this venerable bishop, dying, as you alledge, in the profession of *humanitarian* sentiments, should never have uttered a syllable against this dangerous and increasing heresy, requires a credulity *more capacious* than any *reasonable* man would, I think, wish to possess. And, as in the reputed epistle of Barnabas no mention is made of this able convert and champion in the cause of Christianity, it may be presumed that the doctrines it contains were not derived from *this pretended new source*, but were the *old and generally adopted* sentiments of the Christian Church.

In short, sir, till you destroy the authenticity of every apostolical record previous to the time of Justin, your appeal to him, as the *corrupter of the primitive faith*, will remain inadmissible; and when you do, I will undertake

undertake to exercise your ingenuity still farther, to annul the corroborating evidence of various heathen testimonies.

“ But if it be admitted, you add, that this
 “ epistle came out previous to 140, there is
 “ still more to prove before any use can be
 “ made of it.” You must allow me, sir, to
 spare my reader a recapitulation of the internal evidence. Two passages were adduced to prove a belief in the divinity of our Saviour, upon neither can you establish the charge of interpolation, and they still remain in all the force of evidence they claimed before your objections. Upon the first, where you endeavour to pick out a difference between the Greek text and the old Latin translation, you must apply to some other reader than me to discover *in substance* any material variation. In the latter passage, where the Greek stands alone, and we have only your interpretation of its meaning, I
 scruple

scruple not to affirm it to be such as no rules of composition will admit. And when we are told that the words,—‘ Let us believe that the Son of God *had no power to suffer*;’ οὐκ εδυνατο παθεῖν, had it not been for us,* only signify that Christ could have no other object in dying than for our salvation, *not* that he had *actually no power* to suffer but for us. Such construction may serve to reconcile the expression to the Socinian hypothesis, but it is distorting the form, and corrupting the very spirit of language in order to effect it.

But the testimony of Clemens Romanus† not being so positive in its affirmation as that

* In giving the old Latin translation of the *first* passage, Mr. H. observes—If he (Christ) had not come in the flesh, (which expression, as understood by the Jews, has been shewed to mean, *if he had not been a man*) I would therefore beg leave to ask him, where such proof has been given? I remember a request of Dr. Horsley, in reply to a similar assertion from Dr. Priestley, that he would produce one instance where the whole phrase of *coming in the flesh*, was applied to the birth or appearance of any *mere man*. I do not recollect to have ever seen that request granted.—Horsley's Tracts, p. 300.

† Reply, p. 185.

of Barnabas, Ignatius, or Irenæus, is *allowed to be genuine*, and *confessedly the work* of this fellow-labourer with the apostles. And as he says little or nothing that can even be construed into a belief in the divinity of our Saviour, the supposition *must necessarily be* in favour of his *humanitarian sentiments*. But allowing no doctrinal point to have been touched upon in the whole course of the letter, what proof will that afford of the opinion of Clemens, any more than an essay upon Christian morality would, as I before observed, ascertain the religious persuasion of me or Dr. Priestley? Besides, to expect that *every* letter from the pastors of the primitive church should contain a repetition of the articles of their common faith, seems no less absurd than to imagine that every Bishop's charge to his diocese, now, should contain a summary explanation of their creed. If we enquire also into the occasion of this epistle, we shall find it to have originated from a new
sedition

sedition raised by the Corinthians against their presbyters. Clemens, to appease their strife, tells them, how God hath always appointed several orders in the church; that under the Jewish dispensation he had ordained high priests, priests, and levites; but for the time of the gospel, that Jesus had sent his apostles. The epistle, therefore, professedly treating of affairs of discipline, and not of *modes of doctrine*, exhorting them to the duties of obedience, and not *inculcating articles of faith*, might carry with it no other demonstration of the author's *peculiar belief*, than what could be collected from incidental allusions, or the coincidence of some extraneous circumstances. But from the impossibility almost of writing on holy concerns, without either a *direct* or *implied avowal* of the faith one professes, a sufficient declaration of the religious sentiments of Clemens was presumed to be contained in the following expression:—*The sceptre of the majesty of God came not in the pomp*

pomp of pride and ostentation, though he had it in his power, (or though he had all things in his power) but in humility, as the Holy Spirit prophesied concerning him. It was affirmed, that the *obvious* sense of these words denoted a *condescension* on the part of our Saviour; that, in the plain and natural use of them, they intimated a superior nature in Christ, and a *deposition* of power and glory for the sake of man's redemption. As you bring no shadow of argument against this *direct* and *literal* explanation of the words, except it be the opinion of Dr. Priestley that they *mean no such thing*, I can only reply to the same repeated objections, with the same repeated answer. And till you prove that the sceptre of the majesty of God, the *Απαύρασμα της Δοξῆς του Πατρὸς*, the brightness or reflected splendor of his Father's glory, as St. Paul calls him, who came not in the pomp of pride and ostentation, though he had it in his power,

but in lowliness and humility; till you prove, I say, that these words do *not* convey an absolute and determinate acknowledgment of *some condescension* on the part of him who came; and till you prove again that another expression of Christ's *thus humbling himself* for our sakes, (or, if you chuse rather, was of so lowly a mind) does not evidently allude to *some exalted means or power* he had in possession, and consented to lay aside; I am willing to abide by what I have already advanced, without feeling the smallest apprehension from the weight or success of your criticism. I would only suggest to you one reflection, and which I think an important one, that if you allow Christ as a *mere agent* of almighty direction, to have possessed *more power* than he *thought proper to exert*, you make the Creator refer to an instrument of his will the *choice* of pursuing his omnipotent designs, and constitute a human being to judge of the

^h Script. Rev. p. 41.

ⁱ Reply, p. 188.

most efficacious means of forwarding the plans of the Almighty. The 53d chapter of Isaiah, indeed, which Clemens brings to state the abject humiliation to which our Saviour consented to be reduced, makes it possible, you think,* from some *particular parts* of it, that

* Reply, p. 196.

* Perhaps this may be best explained to the reader in a note. Mr. H. contends that in this whole chapter of Isaiah, *not a word* is to be found to signify *the pre-existence* of Christ, unless it be the passage, *his generation who shall relate*;—and that Bishop Lowth renders even this passage differently, *the manner of his life who could declare*? And again, Mr. Whitby interprets it, *the men of his generation who shall describe*; agreeable to the comment of Grotius, *how wicked must that generation be who put to death the most innocent person in the world*. Mr. H. might also have added some other expositions, such as, *who shall declare how long he shall live?* or, *who shall calculate the number of his spiritual offspring, or those who shall embrace his gospel?* If I object to the decision of so many respectable authorities, it is upon this plain ground,—Because the present version conveys the immediate sense of the original words, as far as the idiom of one language can convey that of another; and because, amidst the numerous explanations of it, no two are found to agree. *Dor*, in the original, is accurately rendered by *γενεα* in Greek, and this again fully explained by the English term *generation* or *descent*. Besides, amidst such a variety of constructions, what would make me still more cautious of departing from the simple and literal one, is, that Justin^a (though I know you think him a *bad commentator*) applies the very expression of the Septuagint *Τῆς γενεᾶς τῆς διανοηθείας*, in

he might have been a believer in the *miraculous conception*, or imagined it to have been an allusion to that extraordinary event; but *that he never understood it to be declaratory of a mysterious divine generation*, is certain, you say, from what he advances afterwards, namely,
 “ The Apostles preached the gospel to us
 “ under a commission from the Lord Jesus
 “ Christ;—Christ is therefore sent by God,
 “ and the Apostles by Christ, and both are
 “ done in their order according to the will of
 “ God.”^m So that, because, to confirm the doctrines of the Church, Clemens deduces them from *God to Christ*, and from *Christ to his Apostles*;—because, in almost the very language of our Saviour himself, who expressly says, *he came from God—he spake from God—and communicated the will of his Father*,

a forcible and convincing argument to prove *the temporal as well as the eternal generation of the Son of God*. This was also the opinion of most of the Fathers; nor does any thing you have urged to the contrary go at all to prove Clemens to have been an exception.

^m Reply, p. 191.

Clemens

Clemens explains the importance of obedience to their ministers, from the dignity of him who had appointed them to be ministers of their salvation; you think a more explicit declaration could not have been given, that he did “ *not believe* Christ to have been a divine person, or to have had any concern in forming the scheme for man’s redemption.” But to make *this* passage, or any of the subsequent ones you adduce, *of any avail*, it behoves you first to establish the *humanitarian doctrine of scripture*. And thus, the faith of every apostolical writer being *ultimately* to be ascertained by a reference to the sacred writings, no enquiry about the truth of scripture can otherwise be satisfactory, than as it tends to unfold to us the progress of heavenly light, and enables us to trace it through a series of ages, and a variety of opinions, to that hallowed and auspicious Sun of Righteousness from which every ray of wisdom began and will never cease to emanate.—

When,

When, therefore, in the *phraseology* and almost every words of St. Paul, Clemens talks of *one God and one Christ*; when, in his appeal to the Father and Creator of the universe, he adopts the *universal language of scripture*; and, after investing our Saviour with the character of *high-priest*,^a when he explains the exalted nature of that office in the sublime description of his chosen apostle; the opinion which from these passages you are led to form of the belief of Clemens, can only be valid in proportion as the evidence to which they appeal decide in your favour. Allow me also to add, that if the pious patriarch you mention,^r had dwelt more on the *application* and less on the *bare expressions* of the holy Father, he might have been spared his indignation, and would certainly have withheld his censure from him, for not bestowing on his Saviour more lofty and divine titles.

^a Reply, p. 193.

^c Clem. Ep. Ed. Wotton, c. 36. p. 152.

^r Reply, p. 193.

To your observation on a second epistle of Clemens,⁹ and which (on the admission of its being a forgery) was certainly ushered into the world under *his signature*, and therefore justly imagined to agree in opinion at least, if not in language, I hardly know how to answer. Upon such a subject we must presume a man to be *serious*; and yet the supposition that one writer, under the cover of another's name, should publish in the face of the world, and with a *certainty* of detection, sentiments *totally at variance* with those of the author whose name he assumed, with the view of leaving it a chance for posterity to decide which of the two were the *original work*, really forbids the *gravity of reply*. Not to lose, however, any advantage that might possibly result from so *ingenious an imposition*, I would wish the advocates for our church to take into consideration the expediency of petitioning Dr. Horsley to change *his own signa-*

⁹ Script. Rev. p. 40, and Reply, p. 194.

ture for that of Dr. Priestley, and trusting to a taste for erudition and classical elegance in a future age, to consign his adversary's works to neglect and oblivion.

With regard to your strictures on Παδημαλα and Μαδνημαλα, I would observe that, whether you allow or not the wilfulness of the alteration, it is an alteration unsupported by any manuscript; and when, without knowing the reasons which Junius advances in behalf of Μαδνημαλα, (for I quote your own words) you bring proofs in favour of his alteration, or rather a peremptory decision that Παδημαλα cannot be the genuine reading, I can only

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say,

¹ Reply, p. 196.

² Ibid. p. 200.

As one objection to Παδημαλα being the right reading, you think that I have erred in my translation of a passage from Clemens I brought to support it; Μελασιος Χειρ, ought in your opinion to be rendered *grace of repentance*, instead of *means of reconciliation*. I should not object to the words of your alteration, because the means of reconciliation could only be brought about by the grace of repentance. But your interpretation of this expression

into

lay, that against the authority of every record, in opposition to holy writ, where the *very same phrase is repeatedly used*, and in defiance of all rules by which we are bound to conduct our argument, you set up an *assertion of your own*, and then imagine that to be satisfactory.

A compliance also with your summons to produce the name of a *single martyr* (BUT AGAIN BEFORE THE TIME OF POOR JUSTIN) who submitted to death rather than deny the divinity of his Lord and Master, I should consider as little serviceable to the cause, had you not annexed to the establishment of such a fact, a refutation of the opinions of Dr.

into a *gracious invitation to repentance*, does certainly not convey the meaning of the passage. For this was included in the commission of Christ's forerunner John the Baptist. *Metanoia* also in the New Testament is used to signify a change or renovation of heart and mind, which repentance may fall short of, and at the same time the consequent terms of reconciliation. Perhaps the least objectionable and most literal version might be *the benefit of reformation*.

* Script. Rev. p. 43.

* Reply, p. 201.

Priestley,

Priestley, — That one, or one dozen such instances should bring about so desired an effect, seems to me extremely improbable, and when the form of inquisition, as you properly state it, consisted in this general demand, *Are you a Christian?* our separate notions of what constituted a Christian, would determine the faith that could thus boldly triumph over the pains of death, and the malice of persecution. But that I may not appear averse to assist so valuable a purpose, I will venture to lay some little stress on the example of Ignatius; for, unless you prove these letters we have already cited to be forged, *his martyrdom* certainly fulfils the whole of your request. Perhaps too, after what has been advanced, you may be inclined to accede to the dying testimony of his disciple Polycarp. I would add also the stoning of St. Stephen, as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, and the murder of St. James, as related from the various accounts of that trans-

action collected by Eusebius.* One other remarkable narrative I would mention from the compilation of Ruinart, which, if it be true, deserves your particular attention. St. Symphorosa suffered martyrdom about A. D. 120. The following is stated as the conversation between her and the Emperor Hadrian: *Either you and your children sacrifice (said the Emperor to her) to the omnipotent gods, or I will cause you and your children to be sacrificed to them.* Her answer was, *Your gods cannot receive me as a sacrifice, but if I be burnt to death for the name of CHRIST MY GOD—pro nomine CHRISTI DEI MEI incensa fuero, I shall rather consume those deities of yours.* I will now leave to you, sir, a necessary task in defence of your principles, that of producing any martyr, who, in his last moments, gave more unequivocal testimony of humanitarian belief.

* Euseb. Hist. p. 65.

† Ruinart's *Acta sincera*. Paris, 1689, p. 19.

FROM these dry and unprofitable fields of human learning, it is with pleasure I now turn to the beautiful and fertile pastures of our divine shepherd; out of which, every flower we have occasionally gathered has been transplanted, and under whose fostering care each cultivated spot has been formed, which in the progress of our researches has hitherto attracted our notice. If the stream of endless mercy has been diverted into various channels, and in each of them mixed with the natural impurities of the soil, be it our fervent hope, that all of them, flowing from one pure and inexhaustible source of goodness, will *there* find sufficient to cleanse and wash away their separate imperfections.— With an earnest desire to drink of the same spiritual fountain, we must both be equally interested in the safety of the path that is to conduct us to the waters of everlasting life. If, therefore, I presume to point out to you the difficulties you may have to encounter in the

one you are pursuing, let me beseech you, with the humility which I hope I possess, and with all the Christian love I really bear you, impartially to weigh and examine the information I shall lay before you, not with the keenness of controversial dexterity, but with that serious estimation which truth demands, and with that awful sincerity which alone can plead in behalf of our errors.

To the Law and the Testimony, in confirmation of the doctrines we profess to believe, is, I know, the cry of us all; and the judging according to our analogy of faith, κατὰ τὴν ἀναλογίαν τῆς Πίστεως, is a sort of apostolic warrant for our religious differences. But as we cannot all be right, the only important question to be resolved is, whether our analogy or rather proportion of faith be borrowed from the scriptures, or the scriptures made to comply with our proportion of faith. Whether we bring the testimony to
try

try our opinions, or bring our opinions to explain the testimony. It is upon this ground alone that I mean to combat your objections, and it is upon this ground alone that I wish to stand or fall, in the judgment of the Christian reader.

Considering that man's future lot will finally be determined from his conscientious enquiry into the sacred records; that our belief will be measured not by the standard of arbitrary decision, but by that scale of evidence which God for his own purpose hath thought proper to lay down, and our obedience justified by the *submission* with which we have received his divine commands; it surely behoves us to consider the work of revelation, not as a matter of science subjected to demonstration, but as *the work of the Lord of Nature*, who, in his moral as well as natural world, has manifested the effects of his mercy and love to mankind, but in both has concealed the cause,

and

and veiled from human eye the mode and reason of his operations.

To begin, therefore, with what composed the first part of my scriptural argument, the *Personification of the Logos, or Word*, by the Evangelist John. In the language of whose gospel it is asserted, that THE WORD WAS MADE FLESH, AND DWELT (or rather TABERNACLED) AMONG US, AND THAT WE BEHELD HIS GLORY, THE GLORY AS OF THE ONLY BEGOTTEN OF THE FATHER, FULL OF GRACE AND TRUTH. But it is to no purpose, you tell us, to bring forward the narrative of St. John in favour of any pre-existent state of our Saviour, unless we first establish the PROPRIETY of supposing that the *Logos means Christ*.* I cannot but think, sir, you have chosen a very *unbecoming* expression, in calling upon us to establish the *propriety* of our belief. For unless the prevalency of

* Reply, p. 45, 46.

new opinions in your mind, and the consequent discredit of our Lord's divinity, be permitted to overturn the confirmed opinion of ages;—unless what has been asserted upon the *strongest evidence* to have composed a part of the Jewish theocracy; what has been deduced and explained from the prophetic writings of the Old Testament; and what the almost universal consent of Christians, and the wisdom and learning of so many great and good men, have given a sanction to, be admitted to be only *fallacies in reasoning*, and *misconstructions of authorities*; we certainly shall not relinquish our claim to the *propriety of belief*; and it seems necessary to remind you, that a *singularity of opinion* requires a *solidity of proof*: that to set aside a clear and connected series of evidence, it becomes you to prove its inconsistency or misrepresentation; that you ought to convict us of mistake, before you pass sentence on our folly, and to *suggest* to us the *strongest motives* to alter, before you venture to condemn our judgment.

To

To shake the reasonableness of our faith from the testimony of St. John, you inform us, that the pronoun *ουτος* will *equally* apply to an *attribute* as well as a *person*. Such an application of it has to my knowledge never been disputed, though it has been justly urged, that bearing in its primary signification a *personal* reference, the secondary meaning should be assumed with caution, and in places only where the sense of the application was indisputable. But we will allow the pronoun to be demonstrative of any thing where the antecedent be masculine, and then, the present case being a dubious one, the construction that ought to preponderate, can only be determined by a comparison of the passage with the context, and with the uniform tenor of scriptural language. To bring the argument therefore into the form of plain discussion, let us confront the *interpretation* of Mr. Lindsey, which I presume to be the one you would chuse to adopt, with *that*

of

of our present version; and then, as we find each supported by the authority of holy writ, the reasons of our preference or rejection will be grounded on those merits alone by which every Christian must wish his opinions should be estimated. The translation of Mr. Lindsey runs thus:—John i. 1. *In the beginning was wisdom, and wisdom was with God, and God was wisdom. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by IT, and without IT was not any thing made that was made. In IT was life, and the life was the light of men, &c.*

For an Evangelist gravely to begin his history with telling us that the supreme and omnipotent God was endowed with wisdom, that through wisdom he made the world, and that wisdom was an everlasting attribute of the Godhead, does not appear to me very consistent with the importance of an apostolick narrative. But when I come to the sixth verse,

verse, and read—*It was in the world, and the world was made by IT, and the world knew IT not*, I then discover a confusion of idea that impeaches its rationality. If wisdom was in the world, or, as it must be understood, was exemplified in the works of creation, as the production of almighty agency, the world *did know It*,—mankind allowed the wisdom, though they had mistaken notions of its divine author. In the 14th verse, however, all is made intelligible; for there we find WISDOM BECAME A MAN,—the acknowledged *attribute of the Deity* is converted into *substance*, and his glory is as “of the only “begotten of the Father, full of grace and “truth.” That you may feel the absurdity of a *personified attribute*, I beg leave to refer you to the pointed animadversions of Dr. Horsley on this subject; and should they not make a due impression on your mind, I will then ask, how the supposition of a *divine person*

* Bishop of St. David's Tracts, p. 219, &c. also p. 250, note.

assuming

assuming human nature, be more mysteri-
 ous than that wisdom or power, an attri-
 bute of divinity, should be invested with a
 fleshly clothing; and whether the conversion
 of an *accident* into a *substance* be clearer to
 your comprehension than a division of per-
 son in the unity of essence. But since, in
 order to make some tolerable sense of the
 words, a *personification* has at last taken place;
 since an *infinite* is joined to a *finite*, and *qua-*
lity has assumed *quantity*; let us proceed to
 examine the predictions about the person
 who *was* to appear, and the fulfilment of
 those predictions in the character and doc-
 trines of him who *did* appear. Previous to
 this enquiry, and with a view of leading your
 attention to a most essential, though greatly
 neglected part of theological study, I would
 cursorily observe, that the *Logos* of St. John,
 and which by the bye he only uses in two or
 three passages of his writings, whilst every
 sentence almost is a cautious comment on its

popular

popular signification, was, together with its corresponding word *δοξια*, a spiritual term of *brilliantship* applied to a divine being who was to proceed from God for the final happiness and redemption of mankind. This composed the patriarchal belief; it was incorporated in the Jewish theology; and it was the language of prophetic testimony. The prospect of a heavenly period to be brought about by the advent of the Evangelical Restorer of man, may be dimly discerned through the mists of heathen mythology; and more clearly discovered amidst the glimmerings of Grecian philosophy; all dispelling every cloud, the Sun of Righteousness dis-

See Mid. Euseb. Pamphil. Evang. Praepar. apostolicum; more particularly from p. 250 to p. 290.

^c See the work of Abbe Banier, and that extraordinary production of human genius, the Mythology of Mr. Bryant.

^d See various passages in Plato's works, but more especially that very remarkable one in his Alcibiades:—*ἡ ἀληθὴς οὐσία*, &c. The reader will find this quoted in Dr. Clarke's Evidence of Natural and Revealed Religion, p. 157, 8vo. edit.

played

played in its full lustre the promised scene of glory, and placed also within our reach the possession of all its blessings.

Possessed as you are, sir, of an inquisitive mind, let me intreat you to reflect on the importance of the examination I am suggesting to you. If our Saviour repeatedly exhorts the Jews to search the scriptures for a proper knowledge of his character; if the law be a schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, and the language of the Old Testament be explanatory of the doctrines of the New; may not the consequences of our errors be as fatal as those of the Jews, provided the foundation of them be laid on our own inattention? And may not unbelief be even more unpardonable, in proportion as our means of information are more convincing? When therefore,

To spare myself the trouble of discussing this part of the subject any farther, I will beg leave to recommend to your perusal
Alix's Judgment of the Jewish Church against Unitarianism,
 Bingham's

therefore, in the descriptions of Moses, the Christian reader finds the Word of God assuming characters and properties of personality, that cannot at all agree with mere speech, or what is ordinarily understood by *word*;—when he is told that the *Word came*, the *Word acted*; in Jehovah will I praise the *Word*; Jehovah sent his *Word*;—when in the xvth chapter of Genesis he reads, that the *word* of the Lord came unto Abram, and in the following verse, that Abram addresseth

Bingham's Origines Ecclesiasticæ, Leslie's Discussion of the Socinian Controversy, Digby's Lectures, and Whitaker's Origin of Arianism. Perhaps I may be more earnest in my recommendation, from a persuasion that they may successfully combat the opinions of a friend† of yours, and whose publication I may hereafter take occasion to notice; who, talking of the Mosaical account of the creation, talks of it as an account *taken probably from distant traditions and indistinct hieroglyphics*. And again, that neither Paul, nor any other New Testament writer, speaks of all mankind as condemned to eternal death on account of an apple eaten by Adam, who is said, by a *dark Eastern tradition*, to have been the first human being who lived in that part of the world. The author should have given us his interpretation of *As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive*.

† Mr. Jardine's *Three Discourses on the unpurchased Love of God*, p. 189.

him

him thus:—**LORD GOD** (*Adoni Jehovah*) what wilt thou give me? And when (though assured by his Saviour that no man hath seen God at any time) he reads in the xviith chapter of the same book, that the Lord appeared unto Abram, and said unto him, “*I am the Almighty God, walk before me, and be thou perfect:*” that after he had established his covenant with the promised father of the faithful, he left off talking with him, and *God went up from Abram*;—when again appearing to him in the plains of Mamre, and listening to his supplications in behalf of Sodom and Gomorrah, the same Lord proceeds to execute his vengeance upon the wicked inhabitants, and is represented as a *visible Jehovah* upon earth raining fire from the *invisible Jehovah* in heaven:—“*Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord in heaven:*”—will the Christian reader, I say, easily reconcile all this to the sublimity of Eastern

Eastern figure, and discover no connection between this divine personage and him who in the beginning was *the Word*, who was with God, “and without whom was not any thing “made that was made;”—who in the Revelation of St. John is described as clothed with a vesture dipped in blood, and whose name was called **THE WORD OF GOD**. If in perusing also the narrative of the deliverance of the children of Israel from Egyptian bondage, he beholds the same guardian Protector—speaking out of the fiery bush,^f proclaiming himself the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. If he sees him exerting his avenging power over the Egyptians, leading the Israelites through the wilderness, giving them laws, and, to use the language of Leviticus,^g claiming them for his chosen people; to whom he says, *I will be your God*;^h among whom he promises to set

^f Exodus iii.

^g Chap. xxvi. 12.

^h It is a curious fact introduced by Mr. Whitaker in one of his notes, [page 40] that the expression, *I will be your God*, is in Jonathan's

his tabernacle, and whom *his soul shall not abhor*. Surely such appearances exhibited to

Jonathan's paraphrase, *My Word shall be unto you God the Redeemer*. And again, *whom his soul shall not abhor*, is rendered in the paraphrase of Onkelos, *My Word shall not abhor you*. Before we quit this subject, I would also mention another sublime *personification of the Word*, which, by whomsoever it may be written, shews equally the substance of Jewish belief. In the book that goes under the name of the Wisdom of Solomon, where the author is describing the calamities brought upon the Egyptians, '*Thine Almighty Word* (says he) leaped down from heaven out of thy royal throne, as a fierce man of war, into the midst of a land of destruction, and brought thine unfeigned commandment as a sharp sword, and standing up filled all things with death.*' And again, the same writer, when recounting the history of their destruction by serpents in the wilderness, and the brazen serpent which Moses was ordered to erect as a sign of salvation to those who looked upon it, thus expresses himself:—'For he that turned himself towards it was not saved by the thing that he saw, but by thee that art the Saviour of all. For it was neither herb, nor mollifying plaister, that restored them to health: but *thy Word*, O Lord, which healeth all things.†' I have adduced these two sublime and collateral instances of *personal identity*, because I cannot but think them convincing in their own nature; and unless St. Paul himself was mistaken in his belief, the latter cannot be set aside by the charge of poetical imagery or fanciful representation. Let the reader compare Numbers xxi. 7. with Corinthians x. 9. I would add, that the change of Christ into God in the first clause, or understanding God at the end of the second, is not warranted by any sufficient authority.

* Wisdom xviii. 13.

† Wisdom xvi. 7, 12.

the senses of his creatures, and such doctrines addressed to their faith, do indicate a prior existence in our Saviour; a spiritual connection subsisting between the Father and Son, unquestionable in its nature, and peculiarly forcible in its import. Let me at least confess, that when I see my Redeemer wielding the arms of omnipotence, and directing the operations of almighty power, when I search the scriptures, and compare the past with the present, and the present as far as I am able with the future; my hope and expectations can only rest upon him "*whose goings forth have been of old from everlasting.*"

Such appears to me to have been the *visible Jehovah** of the Old Testament, and

¹ Micah v. 2.

* It has been usual to ridicule the idea of a *visible Jehovah*, by playing upon the words *visible* and *invisible*:—that there could not be two Jehovahs; for if the *visible* one was of the same nature with the *invisible* one, he also must be *invisible*. Those, however, who call *this* argument, spare us the trouble of answering
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such that great and pre-existent Being, who from the bosom of his Father descended upon earth to recover a fallen race, and to communicate the means of restoration to a lost inheritance.

From this *prior state of glory*, from that awful sublimity in which we have contemplated the *Lord of Hosts*, and the *avenging God of Jacob*, we will now behold him accommodating the plan of man's redemption

ing them by their concessions. For they allow that the invisible Jehovah made *extraordinary manifestations* of himself by outward symbols, by fire, by cloud, by an audible voice, and by *some particular figure*. And what is the *visible Jehovah* we contend for, but the *extraordinary manifestation* of the great uncreated Spirit (who could not be an object of sense) by *some particular figure*. See this argument detailed in a late publication by Thomas Porter, p. 71. As this *Defence of Unitarianism* is professedly an answer to the sermons of Mr. Hawker on the Divinity of Christ, it is with true Christian pleasure I give my humble opinion, that as long as simplicity and plainness of evidence shall outweigh, in the minds of men, the subtlety of disputation, and the cavils of ingenuity and acuteness, the believer in the divinity of his Saviour will have to thank this able defender of it, for placing his faith on a foundation that may bid defiance to the attacks of its adversaries.

to the frame of human nature, and pursuing the purpose of his eternal happiness through the painful participation of our infirmities, and through the various and afflicting scenes which arose out of his mild and merciful condescension. Why our Saviour submitted to be reduced to so low a state as that of a common infant on his entrance into the world; and why a Being of infinite glory and perfection should condescend to degrade himself from all this power and dignity, and appear not only in the form, but under all the wants and weaknesses, and pains of man; are questions that may lead *reason* astray, and make it a stumbling-block of *faith*; but which, presuming to enquire into the *cause* of a transaction, *the existence* of which is the only part of it we can possibly know, forbids any farther answer, than, satisfied that it is the dispensation of God *made manifest* to us, we deem ourselves bound to believe it, and that, by *doubting or disputing the evidence*, we should

should contradict the most noble and essential part of his almighty design.

But before we dwell on the stupendous dignity of the Messiah's office when he appeared upon earth, permit me to take a rapid glance at the *predictions* of his extraordinary appearance. In Isaiah, (for we will take the prophets in the order in which they stand in our Bible) he is proclaimed a child to be born, who shall be called *Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God,¹ the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.* In Jeremiah he is called,

THE

¹ Isaiah ix. 6. I know it has been urged, that these expressions are all omitted in the Vatican copy of the Septuagint, where the only distinction of title allotted to Christ is, *The Messenger of the great Council*, Μεγαλης Βουλης Αγγελος. Till we have better proof than this affords of *the original text being corrupted*, I certainly shall think myself entitled to apply it in its full force. Nor, supposing the Vatican copy to be right, would it, in my opinion, be difficult to produce the strongest evidence, that the *Messenger*, or as it may be rendered, *the Angel of the great Council*, or the Angel of the Lord, by which name our Saviour was also called, included the full description of the prophet. It is also worthy of remark, that those who wrest the application of this passage to the birth

THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS." In his prophetic vision, Daniel beheld one *like the Son of Man coming with the clouds of heaven.*" In Micah v. 2. the infant Saviour is predicted to be born in Bethlehem Ephrata, and to be one "*whose goings forth have been from old, from everlasting.*" In Zechariah ii. 10, where the promise of God's redemption is foretold, it is in these remarkable words: "*Sing and*

birth of Hezekiah alone, take it *in the original Hebrew*, with the whole cluster of titles. It had been far easier to have sided with those who oppose his divinity, and to have built their arguments on the Septuagint version.

^m To rescue this text from every perverted meaning, see a Sermon of Dr. Eveleigh, 1791.

ⁿ On comparing this passage with the answer of our Saviour to the high priest, who adjured him to declare whether he *was the Son of God*, [Matth. xxvi. 64.] a fair, and I think, a conclusive inference may be drawn of what the Jewish belief was concerning their Messiah, and in what estimation they regarded this prophecy respecting him. "Hereafter" (says our Saviour) "shall ye see the *Son of Man* sitting on the right hand of power, and *coming in the clouds.*" Observe, he does not say he is the Christ in direct reply to the question, and yet they accuse him of blasphemy, and insultingly call him the Christ;—but why, unless he had arrogated a dignity that they believed was to belong to a nobler personage than the son of Joseph and Mary, and whose advent they expected.

"rejoice,

"rejoice, O daughter of Sion: for lo, I come, and
 "I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the
 "LORD. And many nations shall be joined to
 "THE LORD in that day, and shall be my people:
 "and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou
 "shalt know that THE LORD OF HOSTS hath
 "sent me unto thee." With a similar allusion
 to the bright æra of Christianity, and to the
 exalted dignity of its founder, the prophet
 Malachi thus breaks forth: "Behold, I will
 "send my messenger, and he shall prepare
 "the way before me, and THE LORD whom
 "ye seek shall suddenly come to HIS temple,
 "even the Messenger of the Covenant;" (the
 ἀγγελος διαθηκης, or the μεγαλης βουλης αγγελος)
 "whom ye delight in; behold, he shall come, saith
 "the LORD OF HOSTS."

Without a desire to strengthen or extend
 any farther the chain of prophetic evidence,
 our next enquiry shall be, whether, in the
 accomplishment of every extraordinary cir-
 cumstance

cumstance thus foretold to attend our Saviour's advent, there exists not such unequivocal proof of a nature far superior to human, and a dignity of birth and character so fully corresponding with these sublime predictions, as to impress us, under the guidance of the most sober reason, with a conviction of his divinity, and to force from us the undeniable confession of St. Peter, "Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God."

It

° Matthew xvi. 16. Upon this exclamation of St. Peter, I cannot withhold the following remark. Our Saviour had expressed his wish to know from his disciples the various opinions of mankind respecting him; and after each had related the different reports spread abroad concerning him, he turns unto his disciples, and says, "But whom say ye that I am." Peter immediately replies, in the words I have quoted—"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona, for *flesh and blood* hath not revealed it unto thee, *but my Father which is in heaven.*" Now on the supposition that Christ was a mere man, what sense can you annex to our Lord's assertion? That he was a prophet sent from God, had been sufficiently exemplified to their senses by the miracles he had performed; and that he was the Messiah who was to come into the world for the salvation of Israel, had been also believed and professed. When, therefore, our Saviour declares *these juster notions* of his character and mission to be *no discovery of human reason,*

but

It were needless to detail the awful records of his birth, or to enumerate any circumstances of a private and domestic life, which, from the few occurrences of it transmitted to us, was probably meant, for the best and wisest purposes, to be concealed from the notice of mankind. But when the allotted period arrived that he was to enter on his ministry, when, proclaimed by a voice from heaven to be the beloved Son of God, he undertakes the task committed to his charge,

but the immediate *inspiration of heaven*, what can the words suggest, but that a belief in his divine origin was an essential part of their faith, and that the immediate illumination shed over Peter's mind would, through the Spirit of Truth, lead them to embrace the same important truth, and to confess that he was the Christ the Son of the living God? Whilst I am upon this subject, I would also draw your attention to another part of the same gospel, because the implication of divinity is there equally strong, and without such implication the passage is wholly unintelligible. In Matthew xi. 10, our Saviour is dignifying the character of his forerunner John the Baptist, and the climax of exaltation is, "Verily I say unto you, among them that are born of women, there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist." If therefore our Saviour was avowedly greater than him, it could not be as a *human being*, nor could it be as a *mere prophet*. For John himself is declared to be more than a prophet, and our Saviour one whose shoe latchet he was not worthy to unloose.

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with what a blaze of divinity does he then shine forth!—The tempest is still at his voice, the unclean spirits come forth at his command, and at his word the dumb speak, the blind see, the lame walk, and the lepers are cleansed. He uses not the language of *subordinate agency*, like the prophets or apostles, but with an almighty fiat he says to the tempest, *Peace, be thou still*; to the unclean spirit, *Come forth*; to the leper, *I will, be thou clean*; and to the impotent man, *Rise up and walk, thy sins are forgiven thee*. He not only wields the arms, but he also claims the title of omnipotence: *My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.*^p *Whatsoever things the Father doth, that doeth the Son likewise.*^q *I and my Father are one.*^r He ordereth all men, that *they should honour the Son even as they honour the Father*. And after sealing with his blood the doctrine which he taught, in what manner did he justify by his

^p John v. 17.^q Ver. 19.^r John x. 30.

resurrection the character he had assumed? When St. Thomas, convinced at last of his incredulity, falls down at his feet, and in the impassioned language of belief and shame, cries out, *My Lord, and my God!* does our Saviour blame him for those high and glorious appellations? does he reprobate his conferring on him the title as inconsiderate and blasphemous? does he, like St. Peter to his fellow-creature Cornelius, tell him to rise up, *for I myself also am a man;* or, like the angel whom St. John was going to worship, *See thou do it not?* No; but on the contrary, with a forgiveness mixed with censure, our Saviour accepts the confession of his disciple as a proof of his conviction, and draws from it a salutary lesson of faith for the instruction of all believers,—“*Thomas, because thou*
“ hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they
“ that have not seen, and yet have believed.”

* John xx. 28.

† Acts x. 26.

* Rev. xix. 2.

Ascribing to himself also the incommunicable attributes of Deity, in the language of omniscience, he says, *I am he that searcheth the reins and the heart.*^x With an omnipresence that Deity alone can fill, he promises to be present wherever two or three are gathered together in his name.^y And asserting an eternity of duration, *I am*, says he, *the beginning and the end, the first and the last.*^z *I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning-star.*

I have dwelt somewhat fully on this collective evidence, that the Christian reader may at one point of view judge of the solidity of that faith which you say stands upon so

^x Rev. ii. 23. ^y Matth. xviii. 20. ^z Rev. xxii. 13, 16.

^a The beginning of this verse is, "I Jesus, have sent mine angel "to testify unto you these things in the churches;" so that the son of Joseph and Mary, a mere messenger of the Almighty to proclaim to man glad tidings of salvation, is at once invested with heavenly sovereignty, and like the great and omnipotent God, dispatches angels on his errands. To be obliged to believe such power to be conferred on a human being like myself, would make me adopt, sir, any persuasion before that of a Socinian.

weak and tottering a foundation. Let him now decide whether the *Word* that was with God, and was God;—that *eternal life* which was with the Father;—that which from the beginning we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the *WORD* of life; be expressive of a pre-existent state of our divine Redeemer, or means nothing more than the “doctrines of eternal life which was in the “councils of the Father, and manifested “unto us by Jesus Christ *from the beginning* “that he *preached it to mankind.*”^b Let him determine whether the “King of kings, and “Lord of lords,”^c be only a derivative title of authority, from a delegated power given to Christ in the government of the church;^d or whether a participation of *the same essence* be rendered incredible by your assertion,— “That the Son *is distinguished* from God, “*ergo, he is not God.*” And *his equality* of

^b Reply, p. 48.^c Rev. xix. 13.^d Reply, p. 52.

nature wholly rejected by St. John, when he says, "And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent his Son, to be the Saviour of the world."

But it may happen, in these several quotations from scripture, that you may again object to me, as you have hitherto done, my total inattention to different interpretations of very able commentators. It is necessary, once for all, that we should understand each other on this head. With the utmost respect for the zeal and abilities of many learned expositors, you will allow me to signify my determined neglect of *many ingenious illustrations*. Where a passage is proved to be improperly translated, where it is *obscurely* rendered, or *unintelligibly* expressed; many thanks and much weight is due to the arguments of those, who, through a diligent revision and comparison, endeavour to make the *style* of

scripture purer, as well as more perspicuous. And in addition to dark and doubtful cases, where, from a gradual change in the meaning of many words, others are substituted more applicable to the present state of language; or where explanatory illustrations are drawn from the rights, customs, and incidents of the people among whom and for whom the revelations of God are gone forth; such interpretations of scripture, whatever be the party or system adopted by the author, demand at least our attention, and may be consulted with advantage. But when neither the original or version is involved in any obscurity of expression;—when, in terms as plain and positive as language can convey, I am directed by my Saviour to the observance of this or that;—when, without the smallest plea for figurative allusion, I receive an absolute command, and, according to the allowed and natural construction of words, feel every reasonable motive for compliance

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with it;—it is not to an arbitrary assumption, or to the novelty of conjecture, that I shall look for additional light and information; nor shall I ever admit *this sort of free communication of knowledge* to be any ways serviceable to the cause of Christianity. Besides, sir, in truths of the last importance, should I listen to the sagacity of human wisdom in opposition to the *affirmation* of my heavenly guide; should I resolve *into doubt* what I was instructed to acknowledge *as certain*, and busy myself in framing objections, where I was bound to submit to authority; how could I be sure that, by such exposition, I might not be giving the lie to my Maker; and do I not act a wiser, because a safer part, in assenting to what is *not impossible*, on the word of my Redeemer, than in taking only as much as you or any other may *deem probable* on the credit of your belief? Is it not less presumptuous to suppose that my Saviour could not lead me into error, than that you or any other

other commentator should guide me into truth? Or, after having employed the general and allowed terms of language to convey his instructions to us, did our heavenly guide mean that we should depart from the established rules of interpretation to explain the purport of them? If this be the case, then most assuredly, sir, the gospel was not preached to the poor. And it requires more *talents* to believe in Christ than I boast to possess, and more *ingenuity* to fix the sense of his religion than I dare to employ. If you will take the trouble to revert to my former publication, you will find what I *now* support, and what I *then* urged against Dr. Priestley, to be precisely founded on the same basis. And after having adduced as *literal* and decisive testimony of the divinity of Christ, as any that he advanced in favour of his absolute humanity, the position I maintained was, that the union of a divine and human nature constituted the truth, and could alone

explain the language of scripture. For if he embraced on one side of the question a *literal interpretation*,^f (to argue again in my own words) and rejected it on the other, he must, in order to reconcile it, have recourse to such construction and such subterfuges as was not allowable with any writing whatsoever. The full force of this argument will, I think, be best exemplified in the examination of your following section.

The extraordinary assertion of our Saviour in St. John's gospel,^g "What and if ye shall see the Son of Man ascend up where he was before," appealing as it does to a future event, and which was visibly accomplished in the sight of all his disciples, I did think so irrefragable a proof of *his pre-existent state*, as to warrant my belief in it, even if there could be found no other corroborating testimony. But with a single stroke of your pen

^f Script. Rev. p. 102.

^g Reply, p. 64. §. 2.

you destroy at once the Trinitarian and Arian hypothesis; for both of us agreeing that the passage must be interpreted literally, by shewing us that the *literal* interpretation *will serve neither*, we must both acknowledge ourselves to be defeated.

According to the *Trinitarian scheme*, you say, "Christ, the God who came down from heaven, and united himself to man, is to ascend where he was before. To ascend where he was before, implies to return to a place after an absence from it. But how is an omnipresent God to be absent at any time from any place?"

According to the *Arian scheme*, "the great pre-existent Spirit which came down from heaven is to ascend where he was before, but it is the *Son of Man* who is to ascend where he was before; if then this text be literally taken, it was Christ's human nature which

"had been in heaven before, conformably to
 "the doctrine of those who hold that at the
 "commencement of his ministry Christ was
 "taken up into heaven, and had a communi-
 "cation with the Father."

This you^a call discovering enough "for
 "your purpose; namely, that whatever may
 "be the true sense of the passage, it cannot,
 "literally taken, be urged in favour of a pre-
 "existent state in Christ."

Thus, sir, quitting the *plain* and *obvious*
import of the phrase, for something you think
 more consistent *with your reason*; and because
 you are unable to comprehend how a divine
 Being should assume a human form, or a hu-
 man form partake of a divine nature, taking
 it for granted it cannot be *literally* true; is,
 as I suggested before, bringing your opinions
 to explain the scriptures, and not the scrip-
 tures

^a Reply, p. 65.

tures to settle your opinions. If the *Son of God* be also the *Son of Man*, and under *both titles* he is indiscriminately named, the Arian might accuse you of quibbling; and if the *Son of God* was truly the blessed Son of the Most High, and *for ever* possessed of this glorifying distinction, the Trinitarian will convict you of unbelief.

But having informed us what you do *not* believe of this affirmation of our Saviour, let us now bring to the test of scripture what *you do*. Without entering into the various opinions about this passage, all of them contradictory, and all of them, let me add, by their *different modes of interpretation*, betraying a sophistry and evasion to avoid the inference of a positive declaration, you confessedly prefer the following explanation of Mr. Belsham: “Doth this offend you, who profess yourselves my disciples? What then would you say if I should reveal in a still greater degree the purposes of the Most High?” If

If this exposition be satisfactory to you, sir, I have only to say, that there does not exist a religious persuasion which may not be fully confirmed on scriptural evidence by a *similar mode of comment*. And supposing the explanation you adopt to be the *true* meaning, was it not as easy for our Saviour to have declared this to be the purport of his words, as for Mr. Belsham to be left the *accurate expounder of them*? Or can we imagine, that when our divine Master was thus laying down one of the *plainest propositions possible* relative to his commission, he would do it in such ambiguous terms as to lead the generality of his followers into an idolatrous mistake?

The resurrection and ascension of our Lord were external evidences addressed to the senses of his disciples, to establish their faith upon fact, and to authenticate, in the certainty of their Redeemer's glory, the unerring truth of the

the revelation he had imparted to them. Accordingly we find him perpetually alluding to these marvellous events, and his disciples as perpetually misconceiving their design and application. In the passage now before us, we learn that Christ, in proclaiming his heavenly origin, had wound up their astonishment to the highest pitch, inasmuch that many of his disciples murmured at his doctrine. Does he endeavour to relieve their doubts; (and which certainly a familiar representation like the one you propose had effectually done) or did he intend to *lessen their surprise* with this wonderful and mysterious assertion? If these were his intentions, he certainly failed in the attempt; for "from that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him."

But permit me to pursue the enquiry a little farther. Is the construction of the

¹ John vi.

phrase

phrase clear and grammatical? Is a single Greek word of it rendered in any equivocal signification? To ascend *where he was before*, implies, according to your own concession, to return to a place after an absence from it. To *what place* then did our Saviour return in the sight of all his disciples? To allow the fact,* and deny the consequences, is what I

* Had you consulted a friend of your's I have already had occasion to quote, and now beg leave again to mention, he would have relieved you from every embarrassment about the fact, which he allows to have been *literally* foretold, and as *literally* accomplished. After a notable piece of criticism, that the word *ἀνέβη*, to ascend, means *simply to go up from a lower to a higher place*, and then restoring to their original situation the fifth and sixth chapters of St. John, which have *evidently* been interchanged, it will almost (says he) immediately follow upon this passage, that *Jesus went up to Jerusalem*.

Upon this *ingenious exposition* I shall leave the reader to make his own remarks; but as the same gentleman in his performance has done me the honour to *hitch* me into a note, he will allow me thus to return him thanks for *his candour and his criticism*. From the former, one might have hoped for a *decency of expression*; from the latter, the *specimen* I have already adduced could leave me *little to apprehend*; the *qui non defendit alio culpante*, would certainly have excused every thing in defence of his friend, but *his petulance*. If I accused the Welsh Freeholder of *illiberality of sentiment*, I produced from his own writings authentic proofs of it; and when, in the work of Mr. Jardine, I read the following

remark:

cannot account for on any principles of candid reasoning, and it were certainly better to dispute the event on the physical necessity of gravitation, or, like Dr. Priestley, attribute the narrative to some wilful interpolation, or to the imperfect manner in which the Apostle dictated, and the consequent errors of his amanuensis. In short, sir, to a plain asseveration of our Saviour, and to a full and visible fulfilment of *all* that he asserted, what sort of

remark:—“Should I,” says he, addressing his congregation, “enjoy your approbation, &c. I should consider my situation as far more happy, and indeed as far more honourable, than that of the most dignified Ecclesiastic, whose emoluments are often purchased at the dear price of integrity, and are always attended with a humiliating degree of mental slavery.” The censure of his friend, which so grievously offends him, I beg he would apply to himself with its full weight; and in answer to his terrifying quotation,

“*Quo morituro reis majoraq; viribus audeo*”

“*Pallit te incautum Picus.*”

Should I, like the unfortunate Lausus, neglect the salutary caution, and fall by the rare powers of his friend's understanding, and his happy talent for ridicule, I shall at least be honoured with the same consolatory requiem, *ENEE MAGNI DEXTRA CADIS.*

* See *The unpurchased Love of God in the Redemption of the World, in Three Discourses*, by Mr. Jardine, p. 103, note.

objection

objection do you present? I can discover *only one*. You will not believe he *could have pre-existed*, and *therefore* the expression must be *figurative*, and our inferences wholly erroneous. When our Saviour talks of being "the bread which came down from heaven," and upon which expression not being *literally* accomplished you lay no small stress, I would ask, if it be possible for language to convey his spiritual meaning through a more simple and forcible image, or to place it beyond the reach of mistake, by a more familiar explanation: "Your fathers," said he, "did eat *manna* in the wilderness, and are dead. "I am the living bread, which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever. And the bread that I will give is my flesh," &c.—Before his death, he fully explains his meaning, by a reference to the very words he had made use of, when he gave his disciples the bread at his last supper, and instituted the

the sacramental offering in commemoration of his sufferings; "Take, eat," says he, "this is my body which is given for you."—Moreover, sir, this is not the only expression, supposing we are not to take it *literally*, that you will have to explain away through the help of *figurative allusion*. When his ascension had actually taken place, the following assertions of our Saviour, must, in my opinion, have been followed with immediate conviction. "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man who is [or rather was] in heaven." John iii. 13. "I came down from heaven, I proceeded forth and came from God." John viii. 42. "Ye are from beneath, I am from above. Ye are of this world,^m I am not of this world."

^l I must beg leave to refer the reader to this part of the argument, as being fully detailed in my Scriptural Revision, from p. 51 to 66.

^m As the son of Joseph and Mary, he certainly, like the rest of his brethren, was of this world, till translated to another.

John viii. 23. "I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world; and again, I leave the world, and go to the Father. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with the glory which *I had with thee* before the world was." John xvii. 18.

Is this consistency of declaration only predicable of *his doctrine*? And when our Lord and Master makes a *personal reference* and *personal consummation*, are we to reject the substantial evidence of our senses for doubtful queries and conjectural emendations? This cannot be called assenting to the gospel, but learning divine truth from the wisdom of human interpretation. And whilst you boast

"When our Saviour joined the two disciples on their road to Emmaus, before he expounds the Scriptures to them, he reproaches them with not having duly attended to what was written concerning him. "Ought not Christ," says he, "to have suffered these things, and entered into HIS glory?" Εἰς τὴν Δόξαν αὐτοῦ. Why *his* glory? Unless it was something he had possessed, the expression is inaccurate; it cannot on any principle of grammar mean a glory *he never had*, but was going to possess.

of

of the *liberal emancipation of your mind*, I must rather consider it as a *sad debasement of your understanding*.

I have forborne to quote, as an additional illustration of our Lord's pre-existent state, the famous text of St. John, (chap. viii. 58.) "*Before Abraham was I am*," because I wish to meet every *particular* objection you make, with a *particular* answer. You argue, that if the pronoun *I* refers to the Divinity of Christ, of which only the pre-existence asserted can be predicated, *he uses a mental reserve unworthy of his high character*, because he speaks of himself, and means *but a part of himself*. But why should he be supposed to speak with any mental reserve, when he only speaks according to the necessity of the case, and as we ourselves are obliged to speak when the case requires it? As we consist of a soul and a body, we often speak of ourselves, and

^a Reply, p. 69.

yet mean but a part of ourselves; because what we say cannot be applied to the other part. Thus, when we say, "*I shall die*," we speak of our bodies only; but when we say, "*I shall never die*," we speak only of our souls: and although in both these instances we speak of ourselves, and mean but part of ourselves, yet no considerate hearer will accuse us of any mental reserve unworthy of our character. When our Saviour declared to the Jews that he was before Abraham, they took up stones to cast at him, not because they did not understand him, but because they did not believe his words: and all your difficulties, sir, arise from the same cause. To us who believe the doctrine conveyed by them, the words are necessary and natural; but to those who do not believe it, they will always be inexplicable, as requiring a sense to which they cannot be turned.

Of the many various attempts to evade them, that to which you give the preference,

is *one* of the worst,—I say *one* of the worst, because the *worst of all*,^p and upon the worst pretensions that could be, was preferred by Socinus himself. You tell us, that for your own part you are best pleased with the opinion of Dr. Lardner, in whose judgment, Christ means not to say that he was *before Abraham in point of time*, but that as Messiah he was *before him in dignity and importance*.^q This might possibly pass, though not without some difficulty, upon a mere English reader; because, in our language, one thing may be said to be *before* another, if it excel it. But when we look at the Greek, we are sorry to find prejudice, in such a cause and in such a

^p A short summary of this interpretation of Socinus, viz. Before Abraham can be Abraham, *i. e.* Father of many nations, *Εγώ ειμι*, I must be the Saviour and Light of the world; may be seen in my Scriptural Revision, p. 67. But extracted as it is from a most ingenious and masterly piece of critical divinity by Mr. Jones, the reader will lose a considerable degree of pleasure as well as profit, if he does not examine this Socinian version, with the whole of that author's comment upon it. See Mr. Jones's Answer to Bishop Clayton's Essay on Spirit, 2d edit. p. 84—87.

^q Reply, p. 71.

man as Dr. Lardner, getting the better of his prudence, and even blinding that acuteness of discernment for which I think him in most cases eminently distinguished. The Greek words are, Πρὶν Ἀβραὰμ γενεσθαι, Ἐγὼ εἰμι.— Now, sir, whatever accommodation of meaning may be had by the use of the English word *before*, either as to priority of time, or superiority of dignity, πρὶν in the Greek will admit of none such. This *invariably* relates to *priority of time*, and therefore the criticism is not only unfounded, but illiterate. Had the Greek been πρὸ instead of πρὶν, it would have admitted the sense of priority either in time, place, or dignity; but then it naturally requires a substantive after it, and with the verb γενεσθαι which follows, could never be so construed. Had you, therefore, sir, paid as much deference to the text itself, as you have done to its commentator, you would have found, I think, that Πρὶν Ἀβραὰμ γενεσθαι, does and must grammatically signify that

Christ

Christ was before Abraham *in point of time*. The other words, *Eγω ειμι*, I am, when standing as they do in the *present* with that which *was past*, are very singular, and can be spoken with propriety only in *one case*, to which the whole world does not afford a second. Forgive me for adding, that your expedient to get rid of this, has no more Greek in it than the former. *Eγω ειμι*, you say, does not denote pre-existence, but is an elliptical expression for *I am the Messiah*, like many other passages in the scriptures. But, sir, *Eγω ειμι*, as it stands in other places, only recognizes *a person spoken of before*, whether it be the Messiah or any other. Thus, in the text you quote,—when the woman saith, “I know that Messias cometh which is called “Christ,” Jesus replies, “*Eγω ειμι*,” I am he. Again, when the man born blind was asked, whether he was the person who had been restored to sight, he answers, “*Eγω ειμι*,” I am that person. But in your interpretation of

the Greek, it might equally mean, *I am the Messiah*.

Upon Dr. Priestley's supposing it to be *incredible*, that, if the *incarnation* was the ground-work of Christianity, it should not be mentioned by Matthew, Mark, or Luke; I answered, that by the same rule *the spiritual existence* of God might be deemed equally incredible, because no such term as *spirit* is applied to him by any of the Evangelists except John. "The case, however," you say, "is not in point; for the knowledge of "one invisible God being clearly revealed to "the Jews, our Saviour is not inculcating a "new truth, but appealing to a truth sufficiently understood." Neither is St. John inculcating *a new truth* by the personification of the Logos, but applying a term to a fact already known, and circumstantially related in the former gospels. Besides, sir, my ar-

Reply, p. 73, §. 3.

gument does not rest upon the *particular* belief of the woman of Samaria, but upon a *general* position. The gospels of St. Matthew, Mark, and Luke, were *not* addressed to the Jews *alone*; the latter was expressly written for the Gentile world: the knowledge, therefore, of God's *spiritual existence*, was as necessary an article of belief for a heathen, as the doctrine of the incarnation was for the faith of a Christian. But in the one case, the *true nature of God* being once explained, the spirituality of his existence necessarily followed. And in the other, the account of our Saviour's miraculous birth being admitted as authentic, the term *incarnate* could not with those that believed it, be liable to any misconstruction. I can find, therefore, no cause for receding from my former argument, *That if the fact be clearly related, the want of the specific term is an idle and insignificant objection.* The real origin of such objections seems to be this:—The Evangelists
were

were historians, and we are polemics. They were occupied in a plain and simple narrative of events, and we are engaged in subtlety of comment, and ingenuity of deduction. They were giving their testimony to the divine authority under which they acted, by enumerating the marvellous occurrences of their master's life; and you are disputing the manifestation of that divine authority, on the omission of words and syllables.

As to your distinction between the *incarnation of the Word*, and the *miraculous conception*, it is only that sort of distinction which the sublime language of Matthew and Luke appears to have forced from some of the followers of Socinus, and equally opposing what we regard as the foundation of Christianity, (the pre-existence of our blessed Redeemer) this or that opinion will neither strengthen nor diminish the force of your defence.

But

But I also alledged, that supposing the prior Evangelists had not enumerated the circumstances of the nativity, still their belief of that mysterious transaction might be proved by St. John's referring to them as witnesses on several occasions, and from his statement of various events denoting their acknowledgment of our Lord's divinity.

If, for instance, in writing of any extraordinary personage, I should omit many remarkable occurrences of his life, because I knew them to have been already accurately related; if I should even corroborate what I did advance, by the concurring testimony of other faithful historians, and only add some incidents which they might have neglected, or with which I might have been more familiarly acquainted; would not the inference be fair, that our respective opinions about him must be the same? Let us then suppose St. Matthew and St. Luke to be entirely
silent

silent as to the manner of our Saviour's birth,
 yet when they talk of him as being the *Son*,
 and the *Lord of David*; greater than *Solomon*;
 greater than the temple; and even the *Lord of*
the Sabbath: when they declare of him, that
he existed before Abraham, that he is to be for
 ever present at the prayers of his disciples; and
 when they place in his hands the supremacy
 of God over his church, and the providence
 of God over his creatures: can we allow
 them to have doubted whether the *Word was*
made flesh; or, in asserting the Son to have
 been also the *Lord of David*, and to have ex-
 isted before *Abraham*, that they believed he
 was nothing more than the *Son of Joseph*
 and *Mary*? But as St. John appeals to the
 miracle which Jesus did in Cana of Galilee,
 “when he manifested forth his glory, and his
 “disciples believed on him;” the question to
 be determined is, “What was the belief of
 “those who saw this miracle? The Jews, we
 “are told, had no other thoughts of the
 “Messiah,

“Messiah, or the anointed, whom they expected, but of an extraordinary person, a prophet mighty in deed *and word*.” But you will recollect, sir, that it was for *not having other thoughts*, for teaching for doctrine the commandments of men, and for making the word of God of none effect by their tradition, that brought on them the reproaches of our Saviour, and ended in the final destruction of their civil and religious establishment. It was this unbelief, this ignorance or misconstruction of the prophecies concerning their Messiah, that shut their eyes against the clearest and strongest evidence; the cross was a stumbling-block of offence, and a *suffering* Saviour impaired the credit of his divine pretensions. The pride of national policy, and the peculiar hatred of the Jews to their Roman governors, prevented them from beholding any thing in the character of him who was to rule over Israel,

^a Reply, p. 76.

but

but that of a triumphant hero; they rejected heavenly for earthly dignities, and killed the prince of peace, because he was not the prince of conquest. Tinctured with these opinions, we find his disciples perpetually mistaking the spiritual application of our Saviour's language; sometimes impressed with momentary awe, adoring his divine power, and at others thinking that it was he "*who was to redeem Israel*," converting all to a temporal deliverance from the yoke of their enemies.—The history of their Master's life is an attestation of *his* transcendent dignity, and *their* own unworthiness. They suppress no evidence, they argue upon no event, but in a settled and undeviating narrative of the marvellous occurrences to which they were witnesses, establish, on the most humiliating confessions, those truths in which is involved the eternal happiness of mankind. Had you considered the evangelical records in this point of view, you would never have ventured to urge in
your

your note at the conclusion of this section, that Peter had very different conceptions from those I entertain of Christ's character, when he exclaimed, "*Thou art Christ the Son of the living God.*" Possibly, sir, he might; or at least the transient conviction was speedily removed; because, immediately after this declaration, the suggestion of his Lord's approaching death and resurrection overwhelms every spiritual idea; and he cries out, "Be it far from thee, Lord; this shall not be unto thee." Matth. xvi. 22. Even the reproaches of our Saviour did not serve to obliterate his carnal notions of the Messiah's kingdom; and seeing Jesus, as he himself had foretold, brought into disgrace and danger, he publickly denied *any knowledge* of that Master, whose cause and whose commands neither the fears of death, nor the execution of the sentence, could afterwards force him to renounce. The similarity, therefore, of

* Reply, p. 78.

our opinions respecting Christ, is not to be examined in the time of national prejudice, or in the moments of a wavering and undetermined faith. But after the great events which followed the death of Jesus had corrected the judgment respecting the nature of the Messiah's kingdom;—when, after the descent of the Holy Ghost, (to borrow the words and truly just sentiments of Mr. Hawker) “this divine illumination from above had fully informed their minds of the principles of the gospel, and they were qualified to become witnesses unto Christ both in Jerusalem, and Judea, and Samaria, and to the uttermost parts of the earth:”^a then, if you discover a difference of sentiment between me and the Apostle upon this important ques-

^a Hawker's Sermons, p. 276. As this passage is extracted from the seventh Discourse of this valuable and ingenious evidence of our Saviour's Divinity, I cannot help recommending this particular part of the volume to the reader's perusal. The testimony of the Apostles is there fully detailed, and Mr. Lindsey will find some notes annexed to it, in my opinion, *rather difficult* to answer.

tion,

tion, the argument will have some weight; and *then only* could you shake my faith, because *then* you would deprive it of what I think one of its most decisive confirmations.

To your examination of my reasons for thinking that the doctrine of a *twofold nature* in Christ is built on scriptural foundation,* my answer will be very short. On the passage from St. John v. 18, that when our Saviour called God his father, the Greek word *ιδιον*, omitted in the translation, indicated a *peculiar* alliance, beyond the reputed relationship of God to the whole Jewish nation; John viii. 41; you deny that it does mark any such *peculiar* alliance, any more than *αδελφον του ιδιον Σιμωνα*, *his own* brother Simon, marks Simon to have been Andrew's brother in a more than common manner. And will you undertake to say, fir, that *it does not*? Can you prove, (and your objection, to have any force, requires

* Reply, p. 81.

such proof) that *τον ιδιον αδελφον*, does *not* mean to distinguish him from some other who belonged to the family of the same name, and who possibly might be his brother-in-law, or allied to him only in half blood. The probability is greatly against you from the *general* use of the word. It invariably distinguishes private from common possession, and in upwards of *one hundred places* in the New Testament is applied in this discriminating signification. Except this *single instance*, which you produce as *one*, I can recollect *no* passage where *ιδιος* is used as a *mere expletive*, or where it does not communicate an *emphatic meaning* to the sentence in which it is placed. But besides the opposition of the Greek idiom, you have also to withstand some other formidable adversaries, and those are, the collective voices of the Jews themselves who heard the words. If they had un-

Υ Δια του ιδιου αιματος. Acts xx. 28. Τη ιδια διαλεκτω λαλουντων.
 Acts ii. 6. Τα ιδια προβαλα καλει. John x. 3. Επι το ιδιον κτηνος.
 Luke x. 34, &c.

derstood him only to assert that God was his father, in the same manner as he was the father of their nation, why should they seek to kill him?—They themselves had claimed the same privilege of relationship:—“*we have one Father, even God.*” This surely then could not have been so great an offence as that of breaking the sabbath, though it is represented as a far more heinous crime; moreover, if they mistook his meaning here, they must also have done it upon other occasions; was there any assignable cause for stoning him when he declared that he was *before Abraham*; and that he was *one* with the Father, had they been satisfied he meant nothing more than that God had predetermined in his councils, before Abraham existed, that he should appear in due time upon earth? or that his *being one* with the Father, only signified his readiness and inclination to perform the mandates of his almighty will?—When the Jews cried aloud for his crucifixion,

fixion, because he made himself the *Son of God*, could the law² by which it was said *he ought to die*, and which was the law against blasphemy, have inflicted any penalty on *your interpretation*? As a prophet sent from God, they might have accused him as an impostor; but under the specific charge of blasphemy, there could be nothing to substantiate the accusation. “But our Saviour,” you say,³ “by his own answer to those same “Jews, has rendered all verbal criticism unnecessary,—*Verily, verily, I say unto you, I can do nothing of myself.*” John v. 19. But you leave out the latter part of the verse, “*for what things soever the Father doeth, these also the Son doeth likewise;*” thus, in the same verse, shewing a *coefficient* of power in terms as forcible as those in which he marks his dependance; nor is your quotation more happily chosen from another part of the same gospel, John x. 34, 35. “If ye called

² John xix. 7.

³ Reply, p. 81.

“them

“ them gods unto whom the word of God
 “ came, and the scripture cannot be broken;
 “ say ye of him whom the Father hath sanc-
 “ tified, and sent into the world, Thou blas-
 “ phemest; because I said, I am the Son of
 “ God?” Considering this as an explication
 of his meaning, or, as you call it, a defence
 against the accusation of blasphemy, it turned
 out a most unfortunate one; for he had no
 sooner uttered it, than he was forced again
 to escape from their hands, to prevent assas-
 sination.

The expression of its “ *being impossible that*
 “ *Christ should be holden of death,*” Acts ii. 24,
 καὶ ὡς οὐκ ἦν δυνατόν κρατεῖσθαι αὐτὸν ὑπ’ αὐτοῦ,
 still appears to me to assign a cause for our
 Saviour’s resurrection operating on the al-
 mighty will, and to be an implied, though
 not direct avowal of a far more exalted being
 than man, “ *whose soul was not to be left in hell,*
 “ *neither was his flesh to see corruption.*” Your
 metaphysical subtlety, that if it was impossible

" *in rerum natura*, that Christ should be holden
 " of death, the will of the Almighty is not at
 " all concerned, nay, the Father is *not* al-
 " mighty, for he could not keep his Son in
 " the grave ;" does not tend to weaken such
 opinion. With a belief in the divinity of our
 Saviour, and beholding him as the conqueror
 of death, over whom death could have no
 dominion, I see much that exceeds my com-
 prehension, but nothing that shocks my
 assent. You on the contrary, with humani-
 tarian sentiments, applying *finite ideas* to fa-
 thom the depths of *uncreated essence*, attempt
 to penetrate into the *intrinsic nature of God*,
 and presume to afford us *demonstration*, where
 the only demonstration is, that the subject
 will admit of *none*.

I could wish you had declined entering, as
 you alledge you might have done, upon any
 arguments against the atonement. You deny

it, with Dr. Priestley, to have any foundation in scripture, and your interpretation of the texts I occasionally quoted in my former work, only serves to convince me more and more of your fatal deception. Not having yet found the Unitarian* who has made the scriptural doctrine of the atonement *perfectly compatible* with the *simple humanity* of Christ, you will allow me to persist in my opinion, that it is a sort of corollary *deducible* from our first proposition, the nature and character of Christ. Why God *could* not pardon without *infinite satisfaction*, is a question I am as unwilling to attempt, as I should be unable to resolve. But when, in opposition to the most positive and unequivocal declarations of *Christ's dying for our sins;—of our being redeemed with his precious blood;—of our being bought with a PRICE;—that he was made sin for us;—and died the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God;—that he was*

* Reply, p. 85.

wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities;—we are informed that the proper sense of these and similar expressions is, “ THAT CHRIST HATH REDEEMED US
 “ FROM THE PUNISHMENT OF OUR SINS BY
 “ PREVAILING ON US TO FORSAKE THEM;—
 when, in the face of the clearest evidence,
 “ The life of the flesh is in the blood;^d and I
 “ have given it you upon the altar to make
 “ an atonement for your souls; for it is the
 “ blood that maketh an atonement for the soul;”
 it is also asserted, that sacrifices were *not* considered by the Jews as an *expiation for breaches of the Moral Law*; do such explications promise to free us from error?—and when, what was done in part or in shadow by their oblations and sacrifices, Christ (we are told) as a *propitiation* for our sins hath truly and fully done for us and for all men, by giving himself for us an *offering* and a *sacrifice* to God for a sweet-smelling savour; are we to accept his mercy with obedient

^d Levit. xvii. 11.

thankfulness, or to sit in judgment on God's dispensations? or, if he spared *not his own Son* to effect the recovery of fallen man, do we safely presume to question the efficacy, or to dispute the necessity of such a sacrifice? To your various expositions of scripture on this head, I shall thus briefly reply:—That instead of enquiring why God *could not* accept a lesser sacrifice, I rather *suffer myself* to be affected with the consideration that the sins of mankind should have demanded so awful a one; and whilst you remain satisfied that repentance and amendment of life are sufficient to lead you unto God, agreeing only in this necessary requisite for a Christian's acceptance with him, I should feel the ground of hope sink under me without the upholding support of an interceding Saviour; and before that Almighty Being, who chargeth his angels with folly, and with whom is dominion and fear, I can find no refuge from guilt but in that *unfinning* obedience which

is placed to our account; and no assurance of forgiveness, but through that covenant of peace and pardon, which, with the price of his own blood, the Prince of Life has purchased and obtained for us.

To bring the religious opinions of St. Paul into the same order of investigation, and with the view of not confounding the extraneous testimony of the fathers with the internal evidence of the scriptures themselves, I forebore to justify the sentiments of Justin by those of the chosen minister of Christ. But your fifth section^d taking up my *renewed appeal* to the Apostle's writings, I must request the reader to revert to your first section, p. 22, where your objections are stated against my assertion that St. Paul maintained the doctrine of Christ's divinity long before the time of Justin. We shall thus bring our respective opinions to a fair issue, and

^d Reply, p. 93.

try them by that fullness of evidence with which I wish the cause should be decided.

The first text I advanced, as confirming my own persuasion, was the following:—

“ Let this mind be in you, which was also in
 “ Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of
 “ God, thought it not robbery to be equal
 “ with God; but made himself of no repu-
 “ tation, and took upon him the form of a
 “ servant, and was made in the likeness of
 “ men: and being found in fashion as a man,
 “ humbled himself, and became obedient
 “ unto death, even the death of the cross.
 “ Wherefore God also hath highly exalted
 “ him, and given him a name which is above
 “ every name.”*

But according to your conception,^f the words plainly shew, that the Apostle did not consider Christ as God, because the *form* of a

* Phil. ii. 5—9.

^f Reply, p. 27.

thing he distinguishes from the thing itself; and Christ, in the same passage, is distinguished from God. Besides, you add, How could God advance to a *higher state* a divine person equally omnipotent, nay, one with himself? To propose *queries*, sir, is not to furnish argument; and I could suppose a thousand things apparently repugnant to reason, which the very dictates of reason itself compel me to acknowledge. Should I disprove the existence of evil, by asking whether it was consistent with almighty goodness to allow it? Should I destroy the terrors of eternal punishment, by an enquiry how far it was reconcileable with perfect justice to punish a finite being infinitely? Or should I discredit the worth of Christianity, by doubting whether a religion could be true, that was not universal? In short, sir, we may question all things, till we reject every thing; nor is reason oftener in some men the dupe of the passions, than it is in others of the imagination

imagination—of an inventive adventurous
 imagination, launching out into those depths
 where it can find no sure footing. “Our
 prospect,” as a most devout and judicious
 writer remarks, “is bounded by a very nar-
 row horizon; our faculties limited within
 a very narrow sphere of activity. Within
 that sphere lie the proofs of God’s attri-
 butes, and of matter of fact, upon which
 revelation depends: and within that sphere
 things in the main are easy and obvious
 to us; beyond it, all, except a few nega-
 tive, indeterminate ideas, is an immense
 blank to us: and beyond it, if any thing,
 the manner of the divine existence, and the
 nature of the unity and distinction in the
 tremendous Deity, are infinitely removed.”
 Unless, therefore, you can unfold to my com-
 prehension the nature of a first cause without
 a beginning; a Being, who neither made
 himself, nor was made by any other; infinite,

‡ Seed’s Sermons, vol. ii. p. 442.

without *extension*; *eternal*, and perpetually existing, without *any succession*; with many other such inexplicable and incomprehensible mysteries; you will not overturn the belief of what I think explicitly revealed, because the subject is placed beyond the reach of clear and distinct explanation. We are ready to allow that the exaltation of Christ is represented as a *gift of God*, but how does this set aside the positive claim our Saviour lays to it as a *right*? If you say, that where there is an acknowledged *gift*, there can be *no right*, would not the argument be *equally* valid on my side, that where there was an *asserted right*, there could be *no gift*? On both sides there is an *unambiguous* declaration; but yours happens to be the *true one*, and therefore the other must be bent to a similar construction! But before you can do this in the case before us, you must again get rid of a *plain and positive assertion*. Whatever be meant by the *form of God*, it is evident that our Saviour

was

was in that form, before he was made in the likeness of man; and his *humility* and *obedience* are wholly unintelligible, but upon the supposition of some *antecedant dignity*. Besides, sir, how could he be said to take upon him the form of a servant, (and which St. Paul in another place calls *taking upon him our nature*) any more than you or I could be said to take upon us our form. If born into the world in the ordinary manner of generation, there could be no *act of volition*. It was his *condition*, and not his *choice*; and when, in explaining the passage *Μορφῇ Δουλῆ λαβὼν*, you yourself allow it to mean, *preferring* to appear like a person who came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, we must, according to your hypothesis, suppose God (as I have before advanced) to have offered his *messenger*, Christ Jesus, the way in which he would come and appear, or else there could be *no preferring*. We must suppose the Creator entering into compact with a creature;

ture; and the Almighty allotting to a human being the arbitration of his heavenly designs.

Let us now see, how far you are warranted in pronouncing the sense you adopt to be the right one,¹ and whether your interpretation has the *greatest* support from the *genuine* sense of the original.

Ὁς ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ ὑπάρχων, “who being in
“the form of God;” you paraphrase thus:
“Who bearing the resemblance of God, in
“as much as God by him suspended the laws
“of nature, and performed miracles.” Why,
then, sir, Moses and St. Paul himself *were*
equally in the form of God, because they sus-
pended the laws of nature, and performed
miracles.¹

¹ Reply, p. 30.

¹ My opinion has always been, and its coinciding with that of one of our most learned and judicious commentators (Mr. Parkhurst) makes me more tenacious of it; that by being in the form of God, the Apostle evidently alludes to the visible Jehovah of the Old Testament, to Christ's glorious appearances as God before
and

Οὐκ ἀρπαγμον ηγησάτο το εἶναι ἴσα Θεῷ,—
 “thought it not robbery to be equal with
 God.” This, which on the supposition of
 Christ’s divine nature is plain and intelligible,
 must be *wrongly* translated, and its being one
 of the ἀπαξ λεγόμενα of the New Testament,
 we have only to oppose to your comment the
 general acceptation of *the separate terms* in
 the classical writers. Your exposition is,
 “Did not think that he ought to make an
 “ ostentatious display of that resemblance to
 “ God, as conquerors are used to exhibit the
 “ spoils they have taken.” Here we have
 again, Christ *the messenger only of God’s will*,
 refusing to make an ostentatious display of
 his powers, and like a conqueror disdaining
 to exhibit the spoils he had taken or possessed.

and under the Mosaic dispensation. At the same time I allow it
 to have no farther weight than such opinion carries. To me it
 carries conviction, because it removes all obscurity; but whether
 this be allowed to explain the Μορφη του Θεου, or not, I contend
 that the words as they stand do indicate a form, a character, or
 somewhat that our Saviour possessed before he took on him the
 form of a servant.

This,

This, sir, is at best a strange sort of circumlocution, and such a one, moreover, as the Greek words will by no means justify; ἀρπαγῆς has but one determinate signification, and that is, robbery or plunder; it is something seized by *violence*, or *unjustly detained*. The word ἡγεομαι is, to lead or pre-
 side, to esteem, or reckon; the natural version therefore is the one that stands in our Bible,—counted it no act of robbery, no invasion of another's prerogative. In the same manner, το εἶναι ἰσὰ θεῷ, which you tell us, according to the custom of the Greek language, is to be taken *adverbially*, and signifies *likeness*, not *equality*, has no such *exclusive* signification. The adjective ἰσός is universally used to denote equality, and its derivative adverb loses none of the original force in the best writers. In the 11th Odyssey, where Ulysses is speaking of Castor and Pollux, he says, Τιμὴν δὲ λελυγχασιν ἰσὰ θεοισιν; again, of Achilles, πρὶν γὰρ σὲ ζῶον ἐτίοιεν ἰσὰ θεοισιν.

Objection. But in fact, whether we say, counted it not robbery to be *equal* with God, or, counted it not robbery to be *like unto God*, or *as God*, the sense of the passage, and the evidence it brings with it, will be entirely adverse to your construction.

οὐκ ἑαυτὸν ἐκενώσας, "but made himself of "no reputation;" according to your interpretation, *but emptied himself*, or conducted himself (except upon those occasions where a striking display of power was necessary for his Father's glory, and the benefit of mankind) like a man who was not thus highly favoured by God. Your periphrasis gives not the sense of the immediate term *emptied himself*, because that means divested himself of, or made void, something he possessed; whereas, by making our Saviour the *mere* instrument of almighty direction, there could not be at any time a deposition of power, because he could have but *just as much*,

much, and at such times only, as the Almighty should think proper for the furtherance of his designs.

Μορφην δούλε λαβων, “and took upon him “the form of a servant.” Preferring, you say, by taking upon him the condition of a servant, to appear like a person who came not to be ministered unto but to minister. Where *the condition was appointed*, there could be no choice.*

Εν ομοιωματι ανθρωπων γενομενος, “and being made in the *likeness* of man.” Being subject, you say, to the same sufferings, and exposed to the same infirmities, as other men. Certainly, sir, the words include this meaning, but they also include much more. As a man, what other *likeness* could he have? In this sense, as a mark of condescension, the expression is absurd; but as “*the brightness of*

* Vide Sup.

"his Father's glory, the express image of his
"person, and upholding all things by the word
"of his power;" the humiliation is clearly
marked, and the application of it apposite.

καὶ σχηματίζουσαν ὡς ἀνθρώπος, ἐταπείνωσεν
ἑαυτὸν γενόμενος υπηρέτης μέχρι θανάτου, θανάτου δὲ
ἐλαφροῦ, "And being found in fashion as a

“man,” &c. that is, in your opinion, “Being in the circumstances and condition of a mortal man, he humbled himself by being obedient even unto death, the death of the cross; although he could have prayed to his Father to come to his assistance with legions of angels.” Till you have proved how a *mere man*, *chosen* to so high an appointment, and born in the most obscure station of life *could humble himself*; and how that humility could be shewn by an *obedience* that was finally to conduct him to an exalted state of happiness, I can listen to no such interpretation: And as you allow the

no. 2187 : text; vol. 870. 1180

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only

only "merit Christ possessed to be that of devoting his life to the cause of truth, and that any other man who would have done the same, (and many such there doubtless have been and are) might lay claim to equal merit;" then the Apostle's language must be allowed in your opinion not to distinguish Christ *but by name* from any of the martyrs in his cause, nor to give him a single honour that any just and good man might not obtain.

If this be the *right* interpretation of this passage, you say, (and how far it is so, the reader from the full statement I have given of it, is left to judge) then we discover in what sense we are to take 2 Cor. viii. 9. "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor," &c. If, however, your interpretation^m be wrong, the inference falls

¹ Reply, p. 127.

^m Let the reader, if he wants farther conviction, consult Bishop Sherlock's four Discourses on this text; vol. iv. 8vo. edit.

to the ground. After what has been said, it would at least discharge me from the necessity of a reply, had it not been for a quotation you have extracted from the Epistle to the Corinthians, in order to prove that St. Paul could not mean by this passage to allude to a pre-existent dignity which Christ had for a time laid down, and was to reassume at an appointed period." "For since
 "by man came death, by man came also the
 "resurrection of the dead; for as in Adam
 "all die, even so in Christ shall all be made
 "alive." Now, sir, had you carried your eye but a few verses onwards, you would have also read, "The first man is of the
 "earth, earthy; the second man is THE LORD
 "FROM HEAVEN." And as the terms, "Ye
 "know the grace," certainly allude, you say, to a previous belief in the Corinthians, you must have recourse to pretty strong figure to

^a Reply, p. 34.

^b 1 Cor. xv. 21, 22.

^c See Hawker's Sermons, p. 55. Note.

reconcile that belief to humanitarian tenets, from this beautiful and sublime chapter.

Again, sir, this extraordinary personage is described by the same Apostle as the "*image of the invisible God; the first-born of every creature; that by him all things were made,*" &c. and to this you answer, "that if the first-born of every creature, (*or of the whole creation*) be supposed to mean the first display of God's creative power, Christ having been created, there must have been a time when he was not, and was brought into existence; how then can he be God?" Here you return to your questions concerning *mode and essence*, which I must once more tell you, sir, I am totally unable to resolve. Unless you can teach me to comprehend the divine nature, I must form my opinions of

⁹ Coloss. i. 15, 16.

^r Reply, p. 35. If you chuse to alter the present version, *πρωτογενος πασης κτιστος*, literally means, the first-begotten before all creation.

it

it from the best information I can collect. *Self-existence*, and *necessary existence*, are two distinct ideas; the one implies *whence* a being is, the other *what* he is. That our Saviour *necessarily* existed with the Father, I can, so far as the analogy reaches, comprehend; just as the corollary of a proposition, *must* have always existed *in* the proposition, or as thought, however subsequent in the order of our ideas, must have been coeval with an eternal thinking mind. Nor is the notion of the Son's *eternal reference* to the Father more difficult to define than the notion of *eternity* itself. The subsequent part of the passage, "*for by him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth,*

"In all effects that are *voluntary*," says Mr. Whitaker, "the cause must be prior to the effect, as the Father is to the Son in human generation: but in all that are *necessary*, the effect must be coeval with the cause, as the stream is with the fountain, and light with the sun. Had the sun been eternal in its duration, light would have been coeternal with it. Was the fountain from everlasting, the stream would be equally from everlasting too." Orig. Ari. p. 175.

"*visible and invisible*," &c. together with other corresponding citations' adduced to prove the creative power of our Saviour, you maintain, do *not* describe Christ as the creator of heaven and earth; first, because the things created by him are things IN heaven and earth; and secondly, they are *evidently* NOT MATERIAL, for they are called things VISIBLE and INVISIBLE, THRONES OR DOMINIONS, OR PRINCIPALITIES OR POWERS. Not being able, sir, to frame, even in imagination, words more fully or more gloriously exhibiting the powers of creation, I must either reject the evidence of St. Paul, or I must admit his language to describe Christ as the proper efficient both of creation, and also of the sustentation of all things. But this, it seems, is only for want of attending properly to the affirmation, which is nothing more than a *metaphorical* allusion to the "*new creation* by the gospel;—or to the *renovation* of all

* Reply, p. 109.

“things in the *moral* world.”^a For, says the
 same Apostle, “Giving thanks unto the Fa-
 “ther, who hath delivered us from the power
 “of darkness, and hath translated us into the
 “kingdom of his dear Son, in whom we have
 “redemption through his blood.”^x “For
 “it pleased the Father, that *in him should*
 “*all fullness dwell*; and, having made peace
 “through the blood of his cross, by him to
 “reconcile all things unto himself; by him,
 “I say, whether they be things in earth or
 “things in heaven.” And again, in writing
 to the Ephesians, (which we are called upon
 to compare with these passages) “In whom
 “[Christ] we have redemption through his
 “blood, the forgiveness of sins; that in the
 “dispensation of the fullness of times he
 “might *gather together in one all things in*
 “*Christ, both which are in heaven and which*
 “*are in earth, even in him.*”^y From all which,
 fir, I can only collect, that because in fulness

^a Reply, p. 110.

^x Coloss. i. 12, 13, 19.

^y Ephes. i. 7, 10.

of time, through Christ in his assumed office of mediator, all things were to be gathered unto God, or in the full import of the word *ἀνακεφαλαιῶσαι*, *united again under one head*, it is a sufficient proof to you that through Christ nothing was created.

By no means, therefore, agreeing with your position, that if St. Paul be supposed to speak of Christ as the creator of the world, *the Apostle must stand convicted of contradiction*. And instead of allowing that the words in the Epistle to the Colossians i. 16. do *not* authorize any application of them to the *material world*, maintaining that they *can fairly apply to nothing else*, I cannot retract my former opinion that such interpretation is *licentious and unwarrantable*. The elusive exposition also of another passage by some able commentators, appears to me equally objectionable; for St. Paul opens his Epistle to the Hebrews with setting forth the dignity

nity of Christ. And after calling him "the
 " brightness of his Father's glory," vindica-
 ting his superiority over the angels, and pro-
 claiming him as the object of their adoration
 and worship; he directly shews the reason
 of such exalted homage, in these extraordi-
 nary words: " But unto the Son he saith,
 " Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever,
 " &c. And thou, Lord, in the beginning
 " hast laid the foundation of the earth: and
 " the heavens are the works of thine hands.
 " They shall perish, but thou remainest," &c.
 Now here without *some figure, or some new*
construction, all application to the *moral world*
 must have ceased; the comparison is made
 between the *works of creation* and *Christ's*
eternity; the former are to pass away, and
 like a vesture to be changed; but sooner is
heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the
moral law to fail. It was necessary, therefore,
 to furnish some expedient explanation to this

* Hebrews i.

text; and necessity in this case, as in many others, has been the mother of invention. First, the Greek is *dubious* and *may* be read, says *Erasmus*,—*Grotius*, that it *ought* to be read, *God is thy throne for ever and ever*. And this is the sense in which you think it *should* be taken. But with all deference to the opinions of two men whom the literary world are so much bound to revere, I must pronounce it to be at least an *inverted*, and I think I might add, wholly an *unauthorised* construction. The *predicate* of any subject is, agreeable to the Greek idiom, distinguished in the sentence by the *omission of the article* before it, and this peculiarity is more carefully observed, where the *predicate* is *named first*. Thus, to favour your interpretation, it should have been, *Θρονος σου Ο Θεος*, the same as *Πνευμα Ο Θεος*, *Νυξ η Ημερα γενεσθι*, *Θεος ην Ο Λογος*, &c. The phrase, rendered with verbal accuracy, would be, *The throne of thee, O God*, &c. But we may retain the *present reading*,

ing, and you have still a solution for the difficulty; for then, it is only taking *God* in an inferior sense; “and as the princes of the earth are called *gods*, Christ, being appointed by his Father to an universal and never-ending kingdom, is denominated *God*,”—I presume καὶ ἐξ οὗτος. Your question also, “if by the word *God*, Christ is to be thought equal to the Father; how are the words which follow to be reconciled, *wherefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee?*” is best answered in the language of our Saviour himself;—“I ascend to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.”^a “I and my Father are one.”^b “Let all men honour me, even as they honour the Father.”^c As to your thinking it impossible to read *this whole passage* without perceiving that it is all addressed to the *same* being; I think so too; we only differ about the person, and that dif-

^a Reply, p. 115.

^b John xx. 17.

^c John x. 30.

^d John v. 23.

ference is so material, that one or other of us must grossly err.

Upon your seventh and eighth sections, I cannot find much to say; stronger proof I despair of bringing, than what has been already advanced, of the value of Christ's sacrifice, beyond that of a man laying down his life for his friends; nor do I wish to confront Mr. Lindsey's exposition with any other answer than that of the text which he, in your opinion, so ingeniously explains. If the expression "*Glorify thou now me, O Father, with*" "THE GLORY I HAD *with thee before the world*" "*was,*" means, according to his conception, the glory our Saviour sought, and not his return to a glory he had once possessed; the roads we take to religious truth are so widely different, that we are never likely to meet, and when you attribute greater merit to Christ, by looking upon him only as a human being, our

* Reply, p. 119.

* Ibid. p. 129.

respective ideas of his *exalted virtues* are almost too remote for comparison.

In reply to your eighth section, "Whether
 "Christ's expiring on the cross was the immediate act of his own volition, or the natural consequences of his crucifixion," appears to me, as I said before, and now repeat, of no material consequence to the present controversy; at best being only an argument of conjecture, it can add no *positive* strength to the Socinian or Trinitarian hypothesis. Upon this subject, therefore, together with what I have adduced on the power of Christ's raising himself and others from the grave, I shall only answer, *What I have written, I have written.* Our Saviour's own words, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up," and which he gives as a convincing sign of his authority, is to me an evident mark of *inherent divinity*; because, as a prophet, or mere instrument

instrument of the almighty will, the *natural* and *unambiguous* expression would have been, *My Father* will raise it up, or *I through my Father* will raise it up; though his resurrection is generally attributed to the power of God the Father. And when our Lord again asserts, that "all that are in the graves shall hear his voice; for as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given the Son to have life in himself." "That as the Father raiseth up the dead, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will." "That whoever seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day." These, and other expressions, so far exceed the bounds of human agency, and speak so decisively of not only the *effect* but the *producing cause*, that, having no idea of omnipotent power exerted by a *creature's will*, I am bound to believe as the

^a John v. 26.

^b John v. 21.

scripture witnesseth, and to put the positive affirmation of my Saviour in place of proof.

With regard to his judging the world; I think your inference against my argument so far *just*, "that if the power given to the twelve Apostles to sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel, be a *delegated* power from Christ, then a *superior nature* to man is not necessary for the sake of determining the final sentence of accountable creatures." Dr. Chandler, in one of his sermons upon the proofs of Christ's ascension, which lately fell into my hands, remarks upon this passage, (and the remark moreover offends not against the purity of grammatical construction) that it means the twelve apostles should be *Christ's authorised teachers* to the whole Jewish nation, and each sitting in the throne or chair of instruction and authority, they should be

¹ Reply, p. 141.

his future messengers of the glad tidings of salvation.* Whether you may be inclined to adopt this interpretation or not, thus much I will affirm, that it applies closer to the original than any of those you have given me occasion to combat. The expression also, "Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world?" may mean (and without trespassing upon the immediate sense of the word *know*) Know ye not that the saints shall *condemn* the world; i. e. force the wicked by the reward of their faith and virtues, to acknowledge the just punishment of their own infidelity and vices. But I do not offer these explanations with a view of getting rid of a difficult passage, because I had much rather abide by the *literal expression*, and confess my ignorance of its meaning, than adopt an *arbitrary signification* at the expence of the *literal expression*. Satisfied, however, that *all judgment* is committed to the Son, and that

* Chandler's Sermons, vol. ii. p. 329.

1 Cor. vi. 3.

consequently

consequently he must be privy to every secret of the human heart, (or there could be no judgment properly moral) from the first hour of man's formation, to the final destruction of the whole human race, I can only reconcile this exalted privilege with the exalted title of the Apostle; "*Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever.*" I may misapprehend the nature of the Apostles' commission, but I cannot mistake the dignity of our Saviour's office, nor imagine, without a *participation of essence*, such an awful communication of power, as none but an eternally wise, and necessarily existing being, can be presumed to exert.

I am now arrived, sir, at your seventh and last letter, and near the conclusion also of all *publick* correspondence with you, I trust, for ever. When in answer to the eight texts of Dr. Priestley, *absolutely declaratory of the sole divinity of the Father*, I confronted them

M with

with eight others as absolutely declaratory of the *united divinity of Christ*; I did all that was necessary for my argument, which was then established on this firm ground,—That if he embraced a literal interpretation on *his* side of the question, and rejected it on *the other*, it was no longer a *fair* appeal to scripture, but an appeal to *preconceived opinions* about it; and that in many cases, in order to reconcile it, he was obliged to have recourse to such construction and such subterfuges as were not allowable with any writing whatsoever. With your objections,^m therefore, to the texts I have quoted, proceeding as they do on the same *unjustifiable mode of interpretation*,ⁿ I forbear to meddle. You cannot support the *sole divinity* of the Father with *greater*

to this notion and men has been that

^m Reply, p. 204.

ⁿ I will only instance one:—To explain the passage from Revelations, "*I am the first and the last*," the *very* expression applied to Jehovah in the Old Testament, Isaiah xli. 4, and xlviii. 12; you say that Christ was the *last* or *lowest* of mortals when he died ignominiously upon the cross, and the *first* or *greatest* of all created beings when he was alive again. Reply, p. 212.

consistency,

consistency, than a follower of the doctrines of Swedenbourg could maintain the *sole divinity* of the Son. He might tell you, in your own words,* “that he followed the plain and obvious meaning of the terms, which, capable “but of one interpretation, asserted the *sole divinity of our Saviour*, and to the seemingly “discordant passages, that he gave a solution “easy, natural, and consistent with scriptural phraseology.” Whilst the Trinitarian, though confounding, as you tell him, all distinction between the singular and plural number of pronouns, ascribing glory to Christ through Christ, and converting his spotless master into a shameful equivocator, dares to charge his adversaries with *sophistry*, and challenges them to that fair and scrupulous examination which such a subject demands, refusing only to receive the witness of man, when the witness of God is greater.[†]

* Reply, p. 230.

† 1 John v. 9.

Upon *this ballowed basis*, do I profess to have taken my stand, nor, through the whole of the present discussion, am I conscious of having placed my faith in a *divine Redeemer* upon any *abstract reasoning*, upon any *probable deduction*, but upon the plain and positive declarations of Christ himself, and the direct and avowed belief of those who were commissioned to declare him to the Christian world. And although, in the course of the enquiry, I may not have pointed out to *you* any errors, you will at least believe me earnest in my endeavours so to do. It is probable (for I will beg leave again to quote your own sentiments^a) that “I may produce no more change in your *opinions*, than your opposition to my religious persuasion has occasioned in *mine*; and that we shall each of us continue the same form of worship which we now respectively practise.” In this latter consideration, sir, is involved the

^a Reply, p. 232.

most serious part of our present controversy. Commissioned to inculcate those religious truths which propose to unite us in the fellowship of Christ's church, I feel myself in a great degree responsible for the faith of those who hear me. And you, with the prevalence of example, rendered more powerful from situation and talents, (supposing our holy communion to be the acceptable worship of the sanctuary) will be responsible for the separation of those whose footsteps you may have turned from the threshold. If our appeal is made to the publick, let us recollect that it is also made to our God. What as a subject of polemical experiment may be brought before the tribunal of criticism, will, as the evidence of *our faith*, be produced at the bar of our judge. If, by the *misapplication of human reason*, you shall be convicted of having *degraded* your Lord and Saviour, or, by a *renunciation* of it, I should be proved to have *idolatrously* exalted him; may our errors find forgiveness

forgiveness in the purity of our motives, and the imperfections of our nature. But with *my* perceptions of revelation, (though, from inattention to my words, you accuse me of shutting the door of salvation against Dr. Priestley, when, with a *natural* and *charitable* wish, I only expressed my hopes, that he would reascend the ladder of faith till it led him to the bosom of his Saviour and his God) I must still pray, that *you*, in the *spirit of free enquiry*, may not lose the *substance* of religion; and that I, in the zeal of defending my faith, may not disgrace by contention the charity it ought to inspire. I must still pray that *you* may be induced to return to the *paths you have quitted*, or that I may experience the consolation of withdrawing others from the communications of error.

With sincere esteem, and every affectionate wish for your happiness,

I remain, dear sir, yours, &c.

F. RANDOLPH,